


SPEECHES

BY

JOS. COWEN, ESQ. M.P.



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SPEECHES

ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND POLITICAL POLICY,

DELIVERED

*During the Parliamentary Contest occasioned by the
death of Sir Joseph Cowen,*

BY

JOSEPH COWEN, ESQ., M.P.

WITH AN ADDITIONAL SPEECH ON THE SUBJECT OF
MR. GLADSTONE'S MANIFESTO.



Newcastle-upon-Tyne :
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P R E F A C E .

THIS volume is issued in order to satisfy a very extensive demand which has arisen for the speeches delivered by Mr. Cowen during the time of his Parliamentary candidature. It has been very widely acknowledged, by persons holding every variety of political opinion, that those speeches possessed a value which extended far beyond the occasion which called them forth, and out of this wide acknowledgement of their merits has arisen a demand which is as extensive as it is unusual. It is not necessary to say many words in giving these speeches to the public, for the judicious reader will readily admit, on perusal, that their appearance in this form stands in need of neither explanation nor apology. Quite independently of the views which they enforce the speeches in this volume have an unique value as clear expositions of political opinion, and as able dissertations on constitutional history. Perhaps no speeches that were ever delivered under similar circumstances were distinguished by such an extent of political knowledge, or by such breadth and fervour of political opinion. In reading them, however, certain facts which materially affected their delivery must be borne distinctly in mind. The contest during which these speeches were spoken was a short and sharp one ; their delivery, like Mr. Cowen's candidature, was entirely unpremeditated ; and they were delivered in the most rapid succession.

Whatever may be thought of the views expressed in these speeches, there can only be one opinion as to the clearness, the earnestness, and the perfect candour with which they are expressed. They have already done much towards destroying

that false estimate of Mr. Cowen's character which has been so vigourously disseminated by unscrupulous opponents; and their appearance in this form will at once settle all controversy as to the nature of his political views. As to Mr. Cowen's political opinions, they require no defence here. They are such opinions as are held by the most able, the most advanced, and the most consistent politicians of the day; and they are such as are certain before long to be endorsed by the general voice of the country. That is the destiny of every advanced politician—to see the public opinion gradually moving in his direction, and finally shaping itself into harmony with his general views! The recognition of the merits of those men who struggle forward in the van of political progress is always tardy; but nothing, in the end, is so sure. There is always a time to sow, and then, by and by, there comes a time to reap. At the gathering in of the results of political opinion the crop is always abundant, and generally the enemy who sowed tares comes boldly in for his equal share of the wheat.

“ Let Freedom's oak for ever thrive
 With riper growth from day to day;
 He is the best Conservative
 Who lops the mouldered branch away.”

With one exception this volume contains the whole of the speeches delivered by Mr. Cowen during the contest occasioned by the death of his father, and the exception is more than balanced by a speech delivered during the general election. The first speech is intended to act as an introduction to the remainder, and with that view the report has been allowed to stand just as it appeared in the papers.

Mr. Cowen's great activity during the general election, and his subsequent illness have prevented his revising more than the first speech. For the revision of the remainder, and for this preface, the editor is entirely responsible.

A. W.

Newcastle-on-Tyne,
 March 10th, 1874.

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MR. COWEN'S SPEECHES.

I.

(Delivered in the Lecture Room, Tuesday, Dec. 30th, 1873.)

THE LATE SIR JOSEPH COWEN—DISINCLINATION TO ENTER PARLIAMENT—THE CONSERVATIVE REACTION—THE MINISTRY—CHURCH AND STATE—EXTENSION OF THE FRANCHISE—TAXATION—THE GAME LAWS—THE LAND LAWS—THE EDUCATION ACT—THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT—TORY ACCUSATIONS—THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT—IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS—HOME RULE—THE PERMISSIVE BILL.

An overwhelming and enthusiastic audience assembled on Dec. 30th, in the Lecture Room, Newcastle, to hear an address from Mr. Joseph Cowen, the Liberal candidate for the representation of the borough in Parliament. The meeting was fixed to commence at half-past seven o'clock, but an hour in advance of that time the hall was more than half filled. A strong current of people continued to flow in until by seven o'clock the room was crowded to its fullest extent. Afterwards many hundreds were turned away from the doors unable to obtain admission, and during the continuance of the meeting a large crowd filled the adjoining street. The rush of electors was so great that frequently during the course of the proceedings the crushing and squeezing at the doors created some little interruption, and caused Mr. Cowen to stop once or twice. On making his appearance upon the platform, Mr. Cowen was greeted with immense cheering, which was taken up and continued again and again. He was accompanied by Mr. T. E. Smith, M.P., the Chairman of the Liberal Committee, and a large number of his committee and supporters.

Mr. T. E. SMITH, M.P., was voted to the chair, and, on rising to open the meeting, was received with great applause. He was quite aware that they did not come there to hear anything he had to say, but that they came there to hear his friend, Mr. Joseph Cowen, with respect to whom they passed such a flattering resolution at the last meeting they held on the previous week. (Applause.) Before Mr. Cowen addressed them, he hoped they would allow

him to say that, in pursuance of what was passed at that meeting last week, they had been doing their utmost, during the days that had passed since then, to promote the success of Mr. Cowen's candidature; and he had great pleasure in telling them—although the large number of persons whom they had to canvass, and the large number of people who had votes at the present election was quite beyond anything Newcastle had ever known before, and this had added very much to the labour they had had to go through—he had great pleasure in telling them that their success had not only been higher and more satisfactory than they had expected, but had quite exceeded their most sanguine anticipations. (Loud applause.) All that now remained to be done was that the people of Newcastle should go on working as they had worked hitherto, and that with the increased momentum and increased impetus which the cause would gain as the day of the conflict got nearer and nearer, he had no hesitation in saying that he had not a particle of doubt that they would put their friend, Mr. Joseph Cowen, at the head of the poll by a triumphant majority. (Cheers.) It would be an absurdity were he to pretend to introduce Mr. Cowen to a Newcastle audience,—(Laughter and applause)—and he would therefore at once leave Mr. Cowen to tell his own story.

Mr. COWEN said—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I have spoken at gatherings of sections of the people of Newcastle in this room during the last twenty years, but I never rose to address an audience, either here or elsewhere, under such conflicting emotions as move me to-night. (Hear, hear.) During the last few days I have lived, in memory at least, half my life over again. Sudden and unexpected events have changed to some extent the current of my private, and, it may be, my public career. Circumstances have arisen which required at my hands prompt decision and immediate action, and the painful and somewhat exciting position in which I have been placed during the last few days has prevented anything like consecutive thought. (Hear, Hear.) If, therefore, during the time I am to speak to night my thoughts are not so clear as they might otherwise have been, I appeal, you knowing the circumstances, to your generous consideration.

THE LATE SIR JOSEPH COWEN.

This is not the place, nor am I the person, to speak of our late member. The remark I have to make on his career—and I do it the more as a means of showing a lesson to young politicians than in commendation of the memory of the departed—is this:—My father started life in humble circumstances, and he lived, by

industry and integrity, to win for himself a fair share of the world's wealth. But he never allowed the mere getting of money, the adding of acre to acre, or house to house, to destroy his interest in public affairs. (Loud cheers.) In discharging his duty to his family he never forgot his responsibilities as a citizen. He preserved to the end the ardent political opinions of his youth, and he died as earnest and advanced a Radical as he was when, fifty years ago, he marched at the head of his brother blacksmiths to the famous political gathering on the Town Moor. (Loud applause.) It sometimes happens that a change in a man's circumstances alters his political principles. That was not the case with the gentleman to whom I refer. (Hear, hear.) There may have been many men more learned in the knowledge of the schools, many men more brilliant, but I can say that I know of no man more conscientious in the beliefs that he entertained, and more consistent in upholding them. (Great cheering.) But "all that wealth and all that power e'er gave" will leave us sooner or later; and everything, my friends, will soon be forgotten except the uses we have made of the opportunities for good that have been placed within our reach. I may remark—I hope not unjustly—with respect to him, that after "life's fitful fever he sleeps well." (Hear, hear, and applause.) Gentlemen, this is the festive season of the year. We are accustomed, those of us who possess households, to gather our friends and families under our own roof tree, and to engage in innocence, mirth, and youthful hilarity—for a season, at least, to banish all knowledge of the concerns of this work-a-day world and its cares and troubles. (Hear, hear.) I regret that the sad occurrence to which I have referred forces upon the people of Newcastle at this time all the turmoil of a contested election, and the heated partisanship of rival political factions. (Applause.) Our district, too, has just had a pall of gloom spread over it by another melancholy catastrophe that has carried desolation and death to many a comfortable, if but a humble, home. All these things tell us, Mr. Chairman, that in this life "man plays many parts;" and that all of us, whether prince or politician, whether ploughman or player, have but one common freehold—the grave. But in this world—this busy, active, period of existence—we have little time for meditation, and none to indulge in the luxury of sorrow. (Hear, hear.) The soldier dies on his march, his comrades slip aside to cover his grave with the green sod, and then march forward. (Applause.) Our member is dead, and it is our duty to elect his successor.

DISINCLINATION TO ENTER PARLIAMENT.

I regret that a section of my fellow-townsmen have selected me as his proposed successor. (Applause.) I would have been glad if this had been otherwise. ("No," and applause.) I have had no ambition for Parliamentary honours. I have been actively engaged in political warfare since I was a lad. I have spoken, and written, and talked, and thought as much on public matters as many men of my age. (Cheers.) It is usually considered that the politician's goal is the House of Commons ; but whether it is from whim, or caprice, or prejudice, or from all these together, I know not, but that great House in Westminster never had any fascination for myself. (Applause.) I would rather labour outside its walls, simply because I believe I could there lead a more useful life. Cheers.) There are three reasons which incite men to become members of Parliament. Some men are anxious to become members of the House of Commons because they believe it is an honourable post. They think that to be able to add M.P. to their name makes them more distinguished. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, in my life I have spoken what I believe to be true, I have done what I believe to be right, utterly indifferent as to the mere success or prosperity of that course of action,—(cheers)— and I have met with an amount of kindness and consideration from my neighbours and from my fellow countrymen which makes me their lasting debtor. (Applause.) I have had as much honour as I deserve, and more than I care for. The mere honour of being a member of Parliament has not therefore any attractions for me. (Applause). Others wish to enter the House of Commons because it adds to their social position. Gentlemen, I have as good a social position as I wish for. (Laughter and hear, hear). There are those who think, and probably correctly, that an entrance into the House of Commons gives a man an entré to what is called "society"—that frivolous, fastidious, hollow, heartless thing. (Loud applause.) I never was enamoured of "society." I have all my lifetime given it a wide berth. I disliked it to start with, and as years have increased upon me that dislike has deepened. (Applause.) I am not a cynic, and I have no wish to judge my fellow-countrymen thus interested harshly or unkindly ; but I repeat that instead of it acting as an attraction to me to be admitted through Parliament into society, it acts in an opposite direction. There is another reason why men seek admission to the House of Commons. They believe that by admission there they have a better and loftier platform from which to propound their political

principles. That ambition I respect ; that desire I honour. (Cheers.) The British House of Commons is the most elevated rostrum for speaking political truth in the world. A man who talks there does not address only the 600 odd members of which that body is composed, but he speaks to the English nation at large—to the whole of the English speaking people throughout the world. There are resolutions passed there which influence for good or evil the entire human family. Legislation that affects the welfare of men who live by “Greenland’s icy mountains, and India’s coral strand”—legislation that even, at this moment, directly concerns those that dwell beneath the torrid zone, and the poor Esquimaux that lives amidst everlasting snows. (Cheers.) I respect the ambition of a man who wishes thus to influence for good, as he thinks, the destinies of mankind ; and, under other circumstances, I would have been glad to seek a seat in that House. (Renewed applause.) But, gentlemen, I have held a somewhat peculiar position in this locality for something like twenty years. I have been a sort of political missionary in this north-east corner of the country ; and I am well known to the hardy denizens of this corner of the country, and they are known to me. (Renewed applause.) I have had frequent and constant opportunities of putting my views before them, and have had for the years that I referred to, a sphere of labour, not so pretensions, not so elevated as a seat in Parliament, but I believe it has been useful and powerful for good. (Hear, hear.) I, for one, should have been glad if it could have been so arranged for me to continue the labours that I have so long been engaged in, instead of entering, as I may do, the British House of Commons. My father had a settled intention, of retiring from Parliament at the close of the next session ; and he had resolved had he been spared, to have called the inhabitants of Newcastle together in the course of next month to have stated his resolution. He intended to have submitted to the entire people his decision, and to have asked them to choose some one whom they might elect as his successor. I was aware that some friends of mine were anxious that I should become a candidate ; but I was resolved that I would not comply with their request. It was my intention at such a meeting to have stated the reasons that I have now given, and to express my determination not to become a candidate for Parliament. I hoped, with a few weeks or months for considering the subject, that there would have been a chance of the Liberal party selecting a suitable candidate, and deciding upon him as

their champion. That was my intention ; but “ man proposes and God disposes ; or to use the quaint expression of the poet Burns,
 “ The best laid schemes o’ mice and men
 Gang aft a-gley.”

The arrangements made and contemplated were broken in upon by the painful event to which I have referred, and the fact came suddenly upon us that the Liberal party in Newcastle were not provided with a candidate. There were one or two, or probably three, gentlemen willing to become candidates. Our friends were anxious to support, some one, some another, and some the third. It was manifest that if two or three candidates came into the field, the force of the party would be weakened, and probably the result would be defeat. (Hear, hear.) I was asked, then pressed, to take the position ; not because I was acceptable to the entire party, but because it was thought that my candidature would create the least division. (Loud applause.) It was on this ground that they urged the matter upon me. The case was put to me in this way, that supposing I became a candidate I should divide the party least. There are circumstances in the history of a man’s lifetime when he is not really the master of his own actions. I have been engaged in political contention for many years. I have been criticising members of Parliament, and I have been attempting to influence the action of the House of Commons—(hear, hear, and applause)—and I feel that it would have been cowardice and selfishness on my part if I had allowed any personal interest or private convenience to risk the defeat of our party, or the endangering of our cause. (Cheers.) I therefore allowed those personal considerations to be set aside entirely, and I am now the accepted candidate of the Liberal party. (Renewed cheers.) There are three qualifications which a Parliamentary candidate must possess before he can be successful in this town. First, the man must be known. If a man is not known, in coming before this constituency, however able or good he may be, he stands at a disadvantage. I believe, at least, I am known in Newcastle. (Loud cheers.) Some of our opponents will say rather too well known. (Laughter and applause.) The next condition is that a man should be identified with the local, industrial, and commercial operations of the district. (Hear, hear.) I think I can answer that condition also. I was born in the vale of the Tyne ; I have lived in it all my life. (Applause.) Since I left school I have not been a consecutive month absent from the sight of its waters, (Renewed applause.) All the material and commercial interests I possess in the world are centred in this.

valley ; and I believe I may say that I hold the principles, and perhaps, the prejudices of Tynesiders. (Laughter and applause.) I share their feelings, and possibly, some of their failings. Even it is made a matter of reproach to me that I speak a language that is "racy of the soil." (Great laughter.) The local condition, then, is fulfilled. The next qualification is that a man should have decided and definite opinions. Well, whatever my opinions may be, whether right or wrong, at least they are decided. I have thought them out for myself. I have arrived at definite conclusions, and I have striven honestly and faithfully to propagate them. (Loud applause.) These opinions to a great extent may or may not be reciprocated by the masses of our population, but at least they are the honest convictions of my mind. In all these matters, therefore, I realise the conditions prescribed—I am a known man, a local man, and I have decided views. (Loud cheers.) I have been thus precise and thus lengthy on this personal question, because there has been some misunderstanding on the matter. Having once referred to, and explained it, I hope I shall have no necessity to do so again. I have stated the plain open truth, without circumlocution and without restraint ; and the case now, as between myself and the Liberal party of Newcastle, is known as well to you as it is to myself.

THE CONSERVATIVE REACTION.

Gentlemen, the issue we are engaged in is clear. We are face to face with the alleged Conservative reaction. (Laughter, hear, hear, and applause.) The gentleman who is my opponent is the chosen champion of the Newcastle Tories. (No, no ; yes, yes, and great applause.) We will fight this battle, therefore, as a matter of principle. We have been told many times within the last few months, or within these two years, that there is a strong Conservative reaction in this country. (Great laughter.) Now what does that mean ? Reaction means going back ; it is receding. Where do they wish us to recede to ? For this last 40 years the Liberal party have practically ruled this country. There have been short periods when the Tories have been in office, but they have not been in power ; because, although in office, they have been compelled to legislate in accordance with Liberal principles. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) For the last forty years, therefore, we may say that the practical legislation of this country has been Liberal. The previous forty, or even ninety years, was a period of Tory legislation. Do they wish us to go back to the legislation of the pre-Reform period ? Do they wish to go back to the days

of Lords Liverpool and Eldon, Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth—those great high priests of modern Toryism? (“No” and applause.) Do they wish us to go back to the time when earnest and honest men were dragged from their beds at night and sent for weeks, and months, and years, to prison without a chance of trial, or even without any formal accusation—when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for years together? Do they wish us to return to those times when the workhouses were crowded with paupers, our gaols filled with political prisoners, and when the country swarmed with Government spies? Do they wish for the time when the working men received for their week’s labour scarcely as much as many of them now receive for a day’s labour? Do they wish us to go back to the time when the poor man’s loaf was taxed, in order that the landlords’ rent might be increased? Do they wish us to go back to the time when the liberty of public meeting was denied, when the press was fettered by vexatious restrictions and crushed by legal enactments? (Cheers.) Do they wish us to go back to the time when Roman Catholics were denied all civil and political rights, and in some parts of the kingdom were not allowed even to be owners of land? Do they wish us to go back to the time when the Jews and Nonconformists were kept outside the social and political life of the country. I make this declaration; that there was not one measure by which social, or political, or civil, or religious freedom was to be achieved that was not steadily and relentlessly opposed by the Tory party. Every project for progress was resisted by them, and it was only when the country was on the verge of rebellion that they gave way. (Applause.) It was only when the Duke of Wellington found that a revolution would take place in Ireland, and that it would be supported by the masses of the English people, that he granted Catholic Emancipation. It was only when they were unable to resist further that they acquiesced in the Reform Bill and other measures of an ameliorative character. We are told that if you scratch a Russian you will find a Tartar. (Great laughter.) This may or may not be the case; but if we scratch a Tory we shall find a tyrant. (Renewed laughter.) The Catholics of this country are a numerous and powerful body, and the Tories were unable to resist their demands for emancipation. The Nonconformists were equally powerful, and almost equally numerous, and they had a grand historical record to appeal to; but it was not until their demands could no longer be withstood, not until they were sufficiently strong to enforce compliance with their wishes, that justice was done them. But take another example,

the less numerous but not less deserving and honourable class—our Jewish fellow-countrymen—and see how the Tories treated them. Till the very last moment they refused this most deserving, inoffensive, industrious, and persecuted race, the rights of citizenship. Gentlemen, as marking the progress that has been achieved, the present Government selected one of their most influential legal advocates from the Jewish race. That gentleman is now elevated to the British Bench—(loud applause)—and occupies one of the most distinguished legal offices in this country. (Cheers.) Contrast the relentless persecution of the Tories of the Jews, and the conduct of the Liberal party towards that people. Mark the difference between the two. The Tories have resisted all progress. They have resisted all reform till the force of public opinion compelled acquiescence with its behests. But they do not really wish us to go back. They know quite well we could not do it. Mr. Disraeli had the opportunity, accidentally, of coming into office a few months ago. He has said that the career of the Government had been a career of plundering and blundering. (Laughter.) It was his duty, when he had the opportunity of taking office, to have done so, in order to stop this blundering, and put an end to this plundering. (Loud applause.) But he did not avail himself of the opportunity that was opened to him, and I will tell you why—because all this talk about reaction is not believed in by the Tories themselves. (Laughter and applause.) They know we can't recede. (Laughter.) It is one of the great glories of this country that not one step taken in Liberal advancement has ever been retaken. That is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the English as compared with other people. During my lifetime the French people have twice achieved political freedom. They have often planted trees of liberty, and made wild speeches in the streets of Paris. But now France—unhappy France—is under the rule of as relentless a Toryism as ever cursed a country. We in this land, on the other hand, whenever we have made an advance, have secured and maintained it—loud cheers—and the Tories are aware it is impossible to go back. (Applause.) But I know what the Tories want. (Laughter.) It is not reaction, but inaction that they seek. They wish us to stand still. They want us to anchor the vessel of the State over the present political arrangements, and remain there; but this is physically and mentally impossible. The laws of nature and of society are opposed to this, everything indeed, in the moral, the mental, and the material world is instinct with life. All things around us progress; and if our institutions

do not move they practically stand still. We had at one time the slow carrier waggon ; that was succeeded by the stage coach, and that again has been superseded by the railway train. We once had only a walking post ; he was followed by her Majesty's mail, and that now is succeeded by the telegraph. (Applause.) The time was, when I was a young man, for people to drop acorns into the ground. [Mr. Cowen here stopped for a minute, as a renewed effort was made by the people outside to press into the hall, but after a few words from the Chairman, order was soon restored.] Mr. Cowen proceeding said : I was mentioning that when I was a young man it was customary for people to take acorns and drop them into the furrows of the field in the expectation that they would grow to oak timber, for they believed that with the extinction of oak trees the wooden walls of England would be destroyed. (Laughter.) What a change have we seen since then ! Vessels that were once built of wood have been displaced by iron ships, and sailing ships by steamers. And so in all things. (Applause.) We have seen an immense mass of apparently worthless materials that our forefathers allowed to lie untouched and unutilised converted by chemical and mechanical appliances into articles of merchandise, greatly adding to the wealth and comfort of the people. If there be progress in the mental, moral, and material world, can there be stagnation in the political world ? ("No, no," and cheers.) But that is what the Tories mean. They are for inaction. They want things to remain as they are. The distinguishing characteristic between the two parties is that the Tories wish things to remain stationery, while the Liberals wish to adapt the institutions of the country to the ever varying and changing circumstances of our age and people. (Cheers.) This is the distinct difference between the two parties, and it is the point on which this election will turn. There are divergences of opinion amongst the Liberal party. Some go further than others ; some go faster, but all are in favour of motion. (Applause.) Some may, in our opinion, desire to go too slowly, others may wish to progress too rapidly, but all are in favour of moving forward. In a large assembly like the House of Commons, where those various parties are fairly represented, the movement that is made must be in support of the average opinion of the majority of the members of that body. (Applause.) Take, for example, the opinion in this room on the large and increasing death-rate in Newcastle. On that subject there are various opinions. Some people think that it is due to the water, some that it is owing to the gas ; others blame

the chemical fumes, and others again attribute it to imperfect sewage and overcrowding. If the subject were to be discussed in this large audience you would have all those various opinions expressed. If a committee should be appointed to give practical effect to them they would have carefully to average those opinions, and that is just the case with Parliament.

THE MINISTRY.

Mr. Gladstone's Government represents, I believe, the average opinion of the Liberal party in the country. It may not go so fast as many of us wish, and it goes a little faster than some desire; but still it fairly represents the Liberal opinion of Englishmen. (Cheers.) I believe that Mr. Gladstone's Government has been dealt with rather hardly, even by men of our own party. I have the highest possible respect for our distinguished Premier. (Cheers.) I know no man who ever guided the councils of this country who was more worthy of our admiration and confidence. (Renewed cheers.) Undoubtedly the Government have made blunders; the members are only human beings like ourselves. But this I do honour them for; they have attempted to do some real work. (Applause.) Contrast their proceedings with the *laissez-faire*, stand-still proceedings of previous Governments. (Laughter.) When Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues took office in 1868 I believe, what Mr. Lowe stated was the literal fact, that they conscientiously determined to improve the legislative machinery of this country. (Applause.) Mr. Gladstone took in hand various Irish questions, such as the Church and the Land Laws; another member of the Government took charge of the army, and another of matters relating to the navy, while another again dealt with the question of education, and another with that of local government. They all attempted to do something, and in doing that something they trod upon the prejudices and interfered with the vested interest of a large number of people. (Laughter and applause.) Naturally enough, those people have cried out. (Laughter.) They have opposed the Government bitterly, but their opposition is not any just ground for our condemnation of their course of action.

" 'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all."

(Laughter and cheers.) It is better for Mr. Gladstone to have tried to do something, and to have failed, than to have stood with folded arms and done nothing. Gentlemen, recollect it is not what Mr. Gladstone wishes, or what his colleagues wish, that can always be attained. They have first to agree amongst them-

selves. They have next to get the measures passed through the House of Commons, and they have then to get them through the House of Lords, which is very often hostile to their proceedings. The measures that come into practical operation are not the measures that the Government themselves conceived, but such as they have been able to force from a relentless opposition. In judging of Mr. Gladstone's Government it is fair to take these points into consideration. I for one, have always given Mr. Gladstone's Government a warm and cordial support. (Cheers.) I will go in advance of him when I believe it is necessary; encourage him, if possible, to further progress, and sustain him in all liberal acts. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) There are two kinds of political questions; there are speculative questions, and there are practical ones. The former are still subjects for popular education, and, therefore, we don't expect them to be embodied immediately in Acts of Parliament.

CHURCH AND STATE.

But there are others of a practical character; amongst which, by way of illustration, I may mention the question of the English Church. (Applause.) For my part I am opposed to any Established Church. (Loud cheers.) I believe that the principle of an established religion is injurious to the Church itself and unjust to the people who differ from it. I am not now arguing the point; I am merely stating my opinion when I say that I think it would be better for the Episcopalian Church to be freed from the fetters of the State, and its teachers not placed under legal restraint. (Applause.) That is my conviction; and if I should become a member of Parliament, I shall vote and speak in favour of such principle. (Cheers.) It is only fair, however, to say that a large number of the members of the Liberal party do not approve of that policy. They believe, and I am speaking of men who are fairly entitled to our respect and consideration, that if we were to deal with the English Church as we did with the Irish Church, and disestablish it, we should, by respecting vested interests, and by handing over to the Episcopal Church the enormous revenue that she would legally become possessed of, erect a powerful ecclesiastical organisation that would be opposed to the interests of popular freedom. I do not agree with that opinion; but I respect the men who entertain it, and it is well worthy of reasonable and intelligent consideration. The majority of the members of the present House of Commons are opposed to my views on this point. There are upwards of 600 members,

and out of that number Mr. Miall can scarcely get 100 to vote in favour of his annual resolution. The mass of the people of England have not yet, I think, given this question the attention it deserves. They have not seriously deliberated on it; but when they do, and choose to alter the composition of the House of Commons, they may change its course of action. But, at the present time, beyond all dispute, a large number of the people of this country are indifferent on the subject, while a large majority of the House of Commons are in favour of maintaining the Established Church. The course of action for a man who believes as I believe in this question is therefore an educational course. We have to try to convince our opponents by arguments, by facts, by reasoning, and by free, intelligent, and dispassionate appeal. I hold that that is the course of action that the advocates of disestablishment must pursue.

EXTENSION OF THE FRANCHISE.

But there are a class of practical questions which demand immediate attention. One of these is the question of extending the county franchise. (Applause.) At present, in this town of Newcastle, every man rated to the poor can give a vote for the election of a member of Parliament; but if he happens to live outside the borough he is deprived of his vote. There are something like 400 miners in Newcastle, working at the Elswick and Benwell Collieries, who have votes; but if these men removed to Gosforth or West Moor they would lose their votes, though it is evident they would be no better and no worse for having changed their place of residence. It is most unjust and unreasonable, a most illogical and indefensible system which gives the franchise to a set of men when they live on one side of an imaginary line, and take it away if they happen to live on the other side. That view is taken by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, and one of the measures to be submitted to Parliament, if not in the next session, in the new Parliament, will be a bill for equalising the county and the borough franchise. (Cheers.) Another practical question is that of the redistribution of seats. (Renewed cheers.) Here we live in Newcastle, a rising, thriving, pushing, vigorous placé, with our streets thronged with trade and our river crowded with commerce, and yet we only send two members to Parliament; and there is the small decaying town of Berwick-upon-Tweed with its 12,000, or 13,000, or 14,000 inhabitants—with only one-tenth of our population and scarcely one-twentieth of our wealth—which has as great a voice, and as

powerful an influence in the legislature of this country as Newcastle. Is there any justice in such an arrangement? Thirsk, Northallerton, and other small Yorkshire towns, having populations varying from 5,000 or 6,000 to 10,000, have members of Parliament, whereas vigorous and enterprising places like Jarrow and Hebburn, with upwards of 30,000, are deprived of any direct representation. I submit that this is a practical question, and one that requires immediate attention. In America, where the population of the country is constantly varying, it is customary to arrange a district by which a given number of people, say 20,000, shall have a member; and when a town comes to have more than 20,000, it is divided, or if it should become smaller, then it is deprived of its member. I am satisfied the only strictly logical plan in this country by which we can remove this anomaly would be by adopting the principle of equal electoral districts. But Englishmen are not a logical people; they act sometimes very illogically; they judge things by their results, and not by the process of reasoning by which they arrive at them. (Hear, hear.) In France, in ancient days, they had provinces—Picardy, Normandy, and others; now they have departments, and it is a difficult thing for foreigners not familiar with these changes to understand the division of the country. Our friends may doubt it, but I am myself conservative in this respect. I like to cherish old associations. I have no wish to destroy anything that can be utilised. (Applause.) We have in this country counties and boroughs, and I could not support, at the present time, an attempt to destroy them. I think we might reasonably adapt the representation to the circumstances. Take, for example, the town of Newcastle. We send two members. Supposing that there was a line drawn in Newcastle, right through the centre of the town, and on one side we elected one member, and on the other side another. Then, again, take the County of Northumberland—which has two members for the northern division and two for the southern division—there is no reason why that county could not be divided into four parts, with one member for each. (Hear, hear.) It would be much simpler and more easy. I do not see any fairness in the people of Newcastle being able to elect two representatives, and the people of Gateshead able to elect only one. I would have every man in the country to have one vote for one member. In Newcastle, if he lived in the west, he would vote for one man, and if in the east, for another. I believe that that arrangement would get over the difficulty that is talked of in the readjustment of seats. Mr. Disraeli hit upon a scheme of making what he called “unicorn”

constituences, like Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, and gave a third member to these towns, but to every householder only two votes. Mr. Forster adopted the notable plan of allowing a man to cumulate all his votes upon one candidate. Gentlemen, I believe in neither of those projects. I have no faith in these fancy arrangements. I believe in the good old English fashion of the majority ruling. (Applause.) If the majority is Tory, let it be so—let them return a Tory; and if it be a Radical, let them return a Radical; and when there is a minority in a town, let them set to work with vigour, intelligence, and determination to bring the majority to their side. (Laughter and applause.) If their cause is a just one, they will succeed; if it is not a just one, they ought not to succeed. I hold this opinion as to the re-distribution of seats, and it is one which, if I should become a member of the House of Commons, I shall endeavour to impress there. (Applause.)

TAXATION.

Another practical question is that of taxation. We have now got the greatest finance Minister that this or any other country has ever had, and we may be satisfied that under his guidance we shall see the finances of this land greatly improved. I lay this down as a general principle with respect to taxation, that some measure of money people must pay in the shape of taxes, and to an amount sufficient for the ordinary requirements of the State; but that money should be levied in the least offensive manner possible to the people who have to pay it, and it ought to be collected in the cheapest possible way. It ought never to interfere with commercial and industrial enterprise. (Hear, hear.) It ought to be levied upon land, luxuries, and realised property, which are fair subjects of taxation. The whole history of the last forty years shows the ability with which the Liberal party have devoted their attention to this subject. Sir Robert Peel, who was a Liberal Conservative Minister, laid down certain principles with regard to finance which the Tories of the day would not agree to, and when he tried to carry those principles out, they drove him from office. Though it cannot perhaps be said that they harried him to death, yet it may be recollected that the present leader of the Tory party achieved his first distinction—if distinction it was—by the relentless manner in which he persecuted that distinguished Minister. They opposed him in the course of action which he took for the liberalising our system of taxation. Mr. Gladstone not only followed in Sir Robert Peel's footsteps, but has greatly improved

upon his project, and what is the result? Why, that the foreign trade of this country during the last twenty-five years has increased to the extent of 400 per cent., and that we are doing an immensely more lucrative trade with other nations than we did previous to the era of free trade. We owe this mainly to the wise legislation of the Liberal party, and the foresight of our present distinguished Chancellor of the Exchequer. I support, therefore, taxation based on the general principles which I have endeavoured to expound, and am content to leave the details of the question in the hands of Mr. Gladstone. (Hear, hear.)

THE GAME LAWS.

Another subject which presses for solution is the Game Laws. (Loud cheering.) There are now in England ten thousand people sent to prison every year for infringements of the Game Laws. I am quite sure you will never convince the ordinary average Englishman that it is an offence against the moral law to take possession of what is here to-day and there to-morrow, on this man's land one hour, and miles away on another man's land a few hours thence; or induce him to recognise as property anything of so flighty a description. (Great laughter and cheering.) Men led into offences against these laws, often from a spirit of adventure, were brought into contact with the criminal class, and were apt to fall into crime, or commence a career disastrous to themselves, their families, and their country. I think it would be well if this subject received the careful and early consideration of members of the House of Commons. You are aware that a special committee has investigated it, and that committee, although presided over by a Tory statesman, admitted that the Game Laws required amendment. I shall be prepared to support any reasonable amendment, but would, at the same time, insist that the only true amendment is that of total abolition.

THE LAND LAWS.

Gentlemen, we have often heard a complaint—and a just complaint—in this country against the laws which now exist in reference to the land. (Hear, hear.) On the other hand, a great deal of exaggeration and fear exist on the subject. I see no reason for such fears, for I do not believe the people of this country will ever agree to any direct interference with the owners of property; and, even if they do, the owners will be justly compensated. (Hear, hear.) Our English Parliament has been doing very little else for many years than compensating people for loss of their

vested interests: and there is, therefore, not the least chance of any legislation which will interfere harshly with the owners of landed or other property. But we might make such an arrangement of our land laws as would contribute materially to the improvement and benefit of the people. We are constantly told—and told justly at the present time—that there is a great dearth of flesh meat, and that altogether the ordinary commodities of life are both dear and difficult to get. We are also warned by the action of Mr. Arch and others that our agricultural labourers cannot find employment, but are driven from the land with a view to make preserves for landowners to sport upon. Take the case of Scotland, for illustration, where, of 20 millions of acres of land, 19 millions of them belong to twelve people, and where, according to the calculations of a great authority, Mr. Leone Levi, two millions of these 26 million acres are laid out in deer parks. We have heard from other parties who are also competent authorities that these parks would, if cultivated, produce 20,000,000 lbs. of good wholesome flesh meat. It is contrary to the interests of the people, and to the interests of the nation, that the land should be used for useless sporting purposes, and that we should be sending the bone and sinew, the mental power and moral force, of our industrial classes to seek a home beyond the great Atlantic. (Great cheering.) I do not know, however, that we shall see any great change in this direction in this country, but this we might do. Mr. Locke King brought into the House of Commons a bill to this effect: If a man now dies intestate, without a will, his personal property is divided among his family in certain proportions, but the landed property goes to his eldest son. I think that is a most unjust arrangement. If a man chooses to will his property either to his youngest or his eldest son, let him do so, for no man has a right to force another against his opinion in the disposal of his property; but if he dies without a will it is fair that the real estate should follow personal estate. I am satisfied that Mr. Locke King's measure which has received the support of her Majesty's Government, if carried, would in a few years silently and quietly, but effectually, make a great change, and contribute to the diffusion of the land of this country among a larger number of people. Again, if a man happens to buy a piece of land, he has a needless and expensive process to go through, for which I do not see any reason. I was interested in the purchase of a piece of land the other day on behalf of a friend—it was only a small plot of land certainly, but the cost of the conveyance of, and ascertaining the title of the land, was more than one-half of the value of the land.

(Hear, hear, and "shame.") No doubt it was an exceptional case, but still such things do exist. I submit that a man ought to be able to sell his land as easily as he sells his railway scrip or his shares in gas works. Further, in matters of this kind it would be well if the tenant farmers' interests could be more respected than they are at present. In Ireland they have got a land law which has been of service, and we ought to have one in England. Landlords and tenants do not disagree so much in this country as in Ireland—(A voice: "That is a mistake")—but if a man in England improves his land and leaves it before he has realized the full benefit of that, he ought to be reimbursed for the unexhausted improvements. This is moderate and reasonable. Such an arrangement would also tend to distribute land amongst a larger number of people, and facilitate its transfer from one man to another. These are all, I submit, practical questions which require the attention of the legislature, and I believe they will have it given to them.

THE EDUCATION ACT.

Another practical question is that of education. There has been a needless amount of irritation on the subject of the Education Act. I do not think we should have had this confusion of tongues on the subject of education—if I may so speak—if it had been properly described. I do not believe that any Government can "educate" a people. They can instruct, or rather they can provide the means of instruction; but there is a great deal of difference between that and education, which begins with the cradle and ends with the grave. Education is a thing that influences man in every action of his life and every turn of his career. He gets it at his home, he may get it from his minister and from the teacher of his religious faith, but what the Government can give is simply instruction in the ordinary elements of knowledge—say, reading, writing, and arithmetic. My opponent says in his address that he is in favour of maintaining the 25th clause—(hear, hear)—that he does so in the interest of the parent, and is opposed to any infringement of the right of the parent's liberty; but at the same time I have some respect also for the conscientious conviction of the ratepayer, who should be taken into consideration. (Hear, hear.) I have no wish to say anything harsh in this matter, but I have a strong feeling that the parsons and the priests have their interests in it. I would deal with the subject in this way. It may not meet the views of all of you, but I am sure my views will commend themselves to the ap-

probation of reasonable men. Take now, the case of Newcastle. We are going to erect in Newcastle three Board schools. These three schools will be erected, and the people will be educated in them. I would propose, in dealing with them, that either half an hour or an hour before the commencement of the regular school hours in the morning, or after the regular school hours at night, the members of any sect or denomination who choose to teach religion voluntarily, may have the opportunity in these schools of gathering together children of their respective religious faith to impart to them whatever religious opinions they may choose. They would do it voluntarily; they would not have to be paid by the State; they would not be paid by the ratepayers. If they felt so disposed, they could teach Catholicism, or the doctrines of the Nonconformist Churches, or the principles of the Jewish persuasion, or the doctrines of the Episcopalian Church. I think it would be reasonable and fair thus to set aside certain spaces of time to allow representatives of any of the religious bodies to have any opportunity of teaching voluntarily the children of their particular faith—(applause)—(understand that the ratepayers would not pay for this tuition), but during the time of school hours I would have no interference by either parson or priest. (Hear, hear.) The ratepayers pay for their children's tuition, and let them, and them only, have control over such tuition; giving the teachers in these schools supreme rule during the school hours, but allowing the different religious bodies, as I have just said, either before or after school hours the opportunity of imparting their theological doctrines. (Applause.) I do not think there is anything unreasonable in that, and I cannot see how any man, however strong his religious convictions may be, can object to such an arrangement. (Applause.) If I should happen to go to Parliament, I shall support that view. It is a practical question, and will receive immediate—if not immediate, very early—consideration at the hands of Government. (Applause.)

THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

There is another series of questions—questions applicable chiefly to working men. There is the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Conspiracy Bill, and the Masters and Servants Acts. (Loud cheers.) We have a most unjust arrangement now by which the workman, if he breaks an engagement with his employer, is punishable as a criminal; but if I break a contract with any people whom I may happen to employ, I am simply liable civilly. (Hear, hear.) The working men, if they break a contract,

should be treated in the same way as the employers, and not as criminals. (Applause.) Mr. Lowe, the present Home Secretary, has given the representatives of the working men to understand that he will support that view. The present Solicitor-General (Sir William Harcourt) and the present Attorney-General (Sir Henry James) before they were members of the Government, pledged themselves to a similar course, and now that they have gone into office, I feel sure that a measure satisfactory to workmen generally will receive the approbation of the Government,—(cheers)—and I hope the assent of Parliament. The questions of the redistribution of seats and extended county franchise; the game laws, the land laws, improved taxation, and the alteration of the Education Act; these, I say, are all practical questions; and if I should happen to be your choice at this election—(hear, hear,)—I shall enforce the opinions on these subjects to which I have rapidly, and perhaps confusedly, given expression. There are other questions of deep interest requiring our attention, but I shall be holding numerous meetings between now and the election, and I will give the fullest and most complete explanation of the principles I hold. (Applause.) No man shall be deceived so far as my opinions are concerned,—(hear, hear, and applause)—and whatever objection there may be to me, no man shall say that he voted for me under a misapprehension. (Cheers.) I may say generally that the views I have expressed—and they are those I will maintain if I am sent to Parliament—are substantially the views that your former representative held. (Hear, hear.) I never knew of a son that stood in closer relation with his father than I did with mine; and I do not know of one question of practical politics that he and I have differed upon. (Cheers.) He was thirty years older than I was. Perhaps I was more ardent and more decided; but in principle we were one and the same. Therefore, those gentlemen who choose to vote for me will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are voting for an individual who believes in and enforces the principles of the representative they formerly supported. (Applause.)

TORY ACCUSATIONS.

One word more, gentlemen, and I have done. Our opponents have been busy during the last few days in attempting to throw a considerable amount of dirt upon the character of the individual addressing you. They have been attempting to convince you, and a large number of the “weak-kneed” people of Newcastle that I am a desperate Revolutionist; that I possess in my power

some extraordinary magical influence that will upset the constitution of this country, and make a general destruction of all that is dearest to us as a nation. (Loud laughter and cheers.) They have afforded me the largest measure of amusement that I have had the privilege of indulging during these last ten days. (Renewed laughter.) Nothing could be more ridiculous, more absolutely childish, more puerile, and more silly, than to attempt to accuse an ordinary citizen of Newcastle of the desperate designs they have imputed to me. (Cheers and laughter.) Revolutionist, destructionist, well! (Increased laughter.) Where have I ever written or spoken one single word to warrant such an accusation? (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Never, gentlemen. They tell us we are going to have a general division of property! Well, I suppose I have the ordinary instincts of human nature—I have a certain measure of self-love, and a certain degree of feeling for my own interest. I would never have mentioned the subject—it was the furthest thought from me to refer to it—but I may say I have a fair amount of the world's wealth, and if we come to have a division, I should certainly be one of the persons that would suffer. (Laughter and applause.) The ridiculousness of the accusation is so apparent that it needs no serious reference. (Hear, hear, and applause.) I am perfectly satisfied that when the bustle and noise of the election have passed away they will see their folly; but I suppose it is necessary to abuse a political opponent. “Any stick is good enough to thump a dog.” (Laughter.) Revolutionist and Destructionist are very old adjectives, and they have been thrown at every reformer since the world began. I do not recollect—because I was scarcely old enough to remember—but there was a time in the recollection of many of those present when John Bright visited this town—it is many years ago—for the purpose of propagating free-trade views. (Loud cheers.) Mr. Bright is now a statesman, but at that time he occupied such a position as I am perhaps considered to hold. He was a political missionary going from town to town explaining his principles, and they accused him of being a Revolutionist and a Destructionist. (Loud cheer.) I have here in my hands a quotation from the local journal of Toryism at that day. After Mr. Bright had spoken in Newcastle, and when he was going to speak at Alnwick:—“It is stated (says the Tory editor) that Bright, the Anti-Corn Law Agitator, is expected to visit the Wool Fair which will be held at Alnwick shortly, in order to scatter the seeds of disaffection in that quarter. Should he make his appearance, which is not improbable (for the fellow has im-

puudence for anything of this sort) it is to be hoped there may be some stalwart yeoman ready to treat the disaffected vagabond as he deserves." This language that is now being applied to me—"Revolutionist" and "Destructionist"—was applied to Mr. Bright twenty years ago by the same party. (Applause.) Mr. Bright was then an exponent of advanced political views, but he has lived to see these views made the law of the land, and he is now a member of her Majesty's Government; one of the most trusted counsellors of the Queen, and one of the most able and respected statesmen of this land. (Cheers.) He has not unsaid a single sentence that he uttered when he was here before; he has not recanted one single opinion that he then expressed, and the Revolutionist of twenty-five years ago is the esteemed Cabinet Minister of to-day. (Cheers.) I am a small individual, and Mr. Bright is a distinguished man; but I will give you another illustration more pertinent and to the point. Within the last few days I had occasion to turn over some papers of my father's, and I found amongst them the programme of the first political association with which he was connected. That programme consisted of four points; Household Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, Abolition of Church Rates, and Free Trade. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Alongside of that programme was a cutting from a Tory newspaper in Newcastle that denounced the advocates of those measures in the terms in which they have denounced me during the last few days—"Revolutionist," "Destructionist," and as a man holding views contrary to the interests of society, and detrimental to the stability of the State. Every one of these principles, however, has been embodied in the laws of the country; and what is the consequence? England to-day is more prosperous than ever she was. (Cheers.) Her people are more contented than ever they were; and I venture to say, upon the authority of the Tories themselves, that the institutions of this land were never more firmly fixed in the affections of the people. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I may not live to my father's years, for man's life is but in his nostrils.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep;"

and it may be, in a few years, that I may have to follow the "great majority;" but if ten or twenty years are vouchsafed to me, I feel satisfied that the principles that I have so feebly expounded to you to-night, and that have been denounced as revolutionary, will also take their place in the statutes of this country,

and that, when they do, the prosperity of Great Britain will be increased, and her future will be more hopeful still; for England is

“ A land of settled Government :
A land of old and just renown,
Where Freedom broadens slowly down
From precedent to precedent.”

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT.

On the subsidence of the applause,

Mr. COWEN rose and said: I do not think that it is necessary for me to answer many questions in the town of Newcastle where my opinions are so tolerably well known, but, nevertheless, either now or at any other time I will answer anything that is a pertinent question. (Applause.) The first question I have had put into my hands is as follows:—“Do you recognise the gross immorality of the enactments, commonly known as the Contagious Diseases (Women) Acts, and will you pledge yourself, if elected, to do your utmost to blot out from the statute book these attempts to render a vicious habit free from its natural and necessary effects?” I have to say at once and without hesitation that I do recognise the gross immorality of these enactments—(applause)—and most heartily and thoroughly sympathise with the gentlemen who are seeking for the total and immediate repeal of these acts. (Loud applause.) If sent to Parliament I will vote constantly, earnestly, and faithfully, in support of any measure having that object in view. (Loud applause.)

IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS.

Mr. Cowen was asked by Mr. Hill if he would vote for Home Rule, and use his influence towards obtaining the release of the Irish political prisoners. (Loud applause.)

Mr. COWEN: My answer is brief and distinct. I shall do everything I reasonably can to assist my Irish fellow-countrymen in seeking the immediate release of the prisoners. (Loud applause.) There are only about thirty Irish political prisoners still in prison, and when you think that there are thirty millions of people in this country, it does seem ignominious in a powerful nation like this to keep these people in custody. They committed an offence against the law, for which they were punished; but it does no man good, either personally or politically, to persecute his opponents relentlessly. I recollect the advice of Hamlet to Polonius, when Polonius said he would treat the players who came to the Prince of Denmark's gate according to their deserts. “Treat them according to their

deserts!" said the melancholy Hamlet. "Use every man after his desert, and who should escape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve the more merit is in your bounty." (Loud and continued applause). Gentlemen, I would treat my fellow-countrymen, the Irish political prisoners, in the sense I have indicated.

HOME RULE.

Mr. Hill asked me a question—namely, with respect to Home Rule. (A voice: "He is not an Irish representative.") I cannot clearly answer that question until I know what Home Rule means in its entirety; but I will say this—that I believe in the principle which underlies, or is supposed to underlie, the Home Rule agitation, and that is the Government of the nation by the masses of its own people. (Loud applause.) The increase of local authority and local government action need not be an unnecessary weakening of central power; but it would invest the people in their respective districts with the fullest amount of power consistent with stability. (Applause.) Take, for example, settlement of local questions by our Imperial Parliament. If a Bill for an Irish railway, or a Bill affecting Irish fisheries, or a Bill affecting any local gas company be promoted, the representatives and supporters of that Bill are to be sent to London at great expense—time wasted, and money needlessly squandered. The cause and the resources of the party promoting these are thus injured. I believe the same thing could be gained, and the same object better served, if these investigations so far as Ireland is concerned were done by an Irish Representative Assembly. (Applause.) We have given to some extent assent to that principle in the case of election petitions. It formerly happened that when an election petition was lodged the representatives had to go to London, and there carry on investigations before a committee of the House of Commons. Now the judges are sent down to the respective places to examine into the matter, and I am certain that these investigations have been more satisfactory to the parties concerned, and also more in accordance with the principles of English law and justice. I repeat, that so far as Mr. Hill's question is concerned, I will use what influence I have—it will probably be very little—however, what influence I have shall be used, heartily and cheerfully, in support of the freedom of the Irish political prisoners. (Loud cheers.) So far as Home Rule is concerned, I do not yet know the details of the measure, and it would be unfair of me to promise to support anything that I am not sufficiently informed about; but the principle that I suppose underlies their agitation I am distinctly in favour of.

THE PERMISSIVE BILL.

I have had the following question put into my hand to answer—"Will you vote for Mr. Jacob Bright's bill for extending the Parliamentary suffrage to women householders and ratepayers?" and I am also asked if I will support Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Permissive Bill. Yes, gentlemen, I shall vote for Mr. Jacob Bright's bill in favour of household (women) suffrage with the greatest possible pleasure. I thoroughly agree with it. (Applause.) If I go to Parliament I shall vote for Sir Wilfrid Lawson's Permissive Bill. (Loud and prolonged applause.) (A Voice: "Then you will never go.") I cannot say whether the prediction may be fulfilled or not, but I am sure of this, whether I go to Parliament or not, it will never affect my opinions on any questions I have made up my mind upon, or alter any course of action I have determined to pursue. (Applause.) I may never be in Parliament—(Cries of "Yes, yes")—that is for the people of Newcastle to decide; but whether I am there or here, I shall on all occasions speak the honest convictions of my mind, and enforce those convictions with all the intelligence I possess, and the respect for my neighbours. (Loud applause.) There are some details of Sir Wilfrid Lawson's bill which I cannot approve of, indeed of which I do not approve; but the cardinal principle is to give power to the people to settle the licensing question. (Hear, hear.) Now, gentlemen, if I am anything, or have been anything, I am a Radical. (Applause.) The basis of the Radical faith is in all cases to hand over to the people the management of their own affairs, and, therefore, I agree with the leading principle of the Permissive Bill. (Renewed cheers.) I hold, too, gentlemen, that the magisterial authorities of this country are not the proper persons to deal with the licensing question. (Hear, hear.) They ought not to have questions of patronage, and questions of pounds and shillings, to decide. They should simply have to see to the enforcement of the law. It is not right that they should deal with patronage, or be able to increase the value of this man's property by granting him a license, or to decrease the value of another man's property by taking it away. (Hear, hear.) That is not the position which the magistrates ought to be placed in; and I am, therefore, in favour of handing over the management of the licensing question to the ratepayers of this country. (Cheers.) We have a board elected for the management of the poor rates, another for the management of the educational machinery, and another for the management of the mercantile marine. We have also councils for the management of municipal affairs, and I think

we ought to have a board elected by the people to manage this licensing system. If the representatives of the people think there ought to be an increase of public-houses, why, let there be an increase; but if they think there should be a reduction in the accommodation, let them act accordingly. (Loud and continued applause, during which Mr. Cowen resumed his seat.)

No further questions being put to the candidate—

Mr. JOHN LUCAS rose, and moved the following resolution:—
 “That, having heard Mr. Joseph Cowen’s declaration of his political principles, this meeting is of opinion that he is a fit and proper person to represent the borough of Newcastle in Parliament, and pledges itself to give him its cordial support.” (Applause.) In doing so, he said that after the expression of his political principles which Mr. Cowen had just given them, and after the way in which the candidate had answered the numerous questions put to him, he thought at that time of the evening it would be almost a work of supererogation for him to say much. He did think this, that there was not a man in the North of England—nay, there was not a man in England—that could command, and deserved to command, a larger measure of Liberal support than Mr. Cowen. (Loud applause.) They had been told that day by the Tory organ that Mr. Cowen was not the representative of the Liberal party. Now, he wondered if that large and enthusiastic meeting would convince the Tories that Mr. Cowen was the representative of the Liberal party, or whether they would be convinced if Mr. Cowen was elected. (A voice: “They must be.”) He heard a gentleman say they must be, and he was quite right, for he prognosticated that Mr. Cowen would be elected member for Newcastle. (Cheers.) What did the Liberals do last Wednesday? They did what their Tory friends dare not do—they called a public meeting of the electors to select a candidate, and if their Tory friends would call a meeting half as large as the Liberals, then he would say they had some right to bring forward a Tory candidate. But they did not believe in that sort of open-handed work, for they selected their candidate in secret conclave. (Hear, hear.) Let him say, in conclusion, that if they examined Mr. Cowen’s public career for the last twenty-five years, they would find that he was fully deserving of the support of every Liberal in the North of England. (Loud cheering.)

Mr. Councillor S. DIXON seconded the resolution.

The CHAIRMAN then put the motion to the meeting, and it was carried unanimously, amidst a scene of enthusiasm.

Mr. COWEN, in reply, said he was reluctant at the outset to engage in this contest. The Liberal party induced him to engage in it, and having once commenced the battle they might rely that he would fight it out to the last, with all the vigour he could command, and with all the power at his disposal. (Immense cheering.) If he was beaten, it would not be for want of zeal on his part, and the defeat would be little to him, but to the Liberal cause it would be serious. (Hear, hear.) When other towns had been sending forth uncertain sounds, he did trust that the good old town of Newcastle would be true to its instincts; true to its historical recollections; and that when the election took place the results would be in favour of the great principles they had so long served in common. (Loud cheers.) Mr Cowen concluded by moving a vote of thanks to the chairman, a stout supporter of Liberalism, for his services on that and many past occasions.

The proposition was carried amidst deafening applause.

The CHAIRMAN returned thanks for the compliment, and after urging the party to be determined and united, said he should not be satisfied unless Mr. Cowen was returned on the day of the poll by a majority of three to one.

The enthusiastic proceedings were brought to a close, but it was some time afterwards before the densely packed room was cleared.



SPEECH II.

[*Town Hall, Thursday, January 8th, 1874.*]

LIBERAL POLICY—TAXATION AND TRADE—TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE—EFFECT OF
THE REMOVAL OF THE TAX ON PAPER—THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT—PARTY
TRIMMING—NORTHERN POLITICIANS—NEED OF POLITICAL EARNESTNESS.

Mr. COWEN, whose rising was the signal for vociferous and prolonged cheering, said: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I have been speaking pretty often within these last few days, and neither my voice nor throat are in as good condition as I should like; but I shall do my best to make myself heard to the furthest end of this room. (Hear, hear.) I have got a numerous list of questions here, which I will answer after I have addressed to you a few observations on points that occur to me. (Hear, hear.)

LIBERAL POLICY.

The opinion that I have maintained during the last fortnight, in Newcastle, has been this—that we owe in a great measure the commercial prosperity which we now enjoy to the Liberal policy of the last forty years. (Hear, hear, and loud applause.) I say we owe it mainly to that cause; not entirely. There have been other influences at work, scientific and mechanical, which have contributed to that end; but we are chiefly indebted for the position we rejoice in and are proud of, to the wise and liberal legislation of recent years. (Hear, hear, and applause.) We have seen the basis of our constitution extended; we have seen civil, political, and religious disabilities removed. (Cheers.) These changes have removed popular discontent, have increased popular contentment, and have strengthened the institutions of our country. (Hear, hear.) With contentment we have got confidence, and with confidence we have got commerce. (Applause.)

As a result of commerce, we have had increased social comforts, and extended industrial enterprise. (Loud cheers.) I think, therefore, we fairly owe the main portion of our present prosperity to the measures that I have indicated; and, if you send me to Parliament as one of your members, I will support those principles and that policy in the House of Commons. (Renewed cheering.) We owe to the Tory party in this country persistent opposition to those measures; and if you send the representative of the Tory party, now before the constituency, to Parliament—(“No, fear,” and laughter)—he will, to a large extent, support the policy which that party has pursued. He will cast his vote in favour of political inaction and commercial stagnation. He will range himself under the banner of Mr. Benjamin Disraeli—(“He won’t have the chance,” and loud laughter)—whose chief claim to remembrance in this country is that he was the most relentless and persistent advocate of the tax upon the poor man’s bread. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He will recognise as the leader of his party in the House of Peers, or one of its leaders at least, the Marquis of Salisbury—a gentleman or a nobleman, whichever you choose to call him—who has never been able to speak of any man occupying a social position beneath that of one wearing a coronet without doing so with a sneer, and in terms of derogation. (Hisses.) Gentlemen, if I go to Parliament, I will recognise as my trusted leaders, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright—(great cheers)—two men to whom we are more indebted for our enlarged political freedom and extended commercial prosperity than to any other two men now living within the confines of this kingdom. (Hear, hear, and renewed cheering.) The issue, then, before you is plain and distinct; and I am satisfied that the result will prove that you will cast your voice and your interests on the side of progress, and in opposition to inaction. (Applause.)

TAXATION AND TRADE.

A friend of mine has, within the last few days, made a speech containing facts and figures which go strongly to support the opinion which I have just now stated. Mr. Edmund Potter, the member for Carlisle—a distinguished, and most earnest advocate of Liberal legislation in this country, an early colleague of Mr. Bright’s, and one of the most prominent members of the Anti-Corn Law League—has recently announced his intention to retire from business, and to retire from Parliament. His workpeople, in recog-

nition of his kindness and consideration to them over many years, invited him to an entertainment, and presented him with an address. In answer to that address, Mr. Potter reviewed the condition of the trade with which he was connected—the calico trade—and the recital of the facts of that history is an eloquent defence and support of the principles that I have stated. Mr. Potter said that when, some 50 years ago, he commenced the trade of calico printing in North Derbyshire, there were something like twelve articles used for the purpose of carrying on his business—pepper, salt, timber, starch, glue, and various other things—every one of which was taxed, and taxed heavily. The commodity which these articles made, when combined, was also taxed, and the result was that the business he was engaged in was hampered and crippled. (Hear, hear.) There was really little or no room for extension. Since then, through the efforts of the Liberal statemen, every one of those taxes had been removed. (Applause.) The consequence is that a great impetus had been given to the trade with which he is connected. (Hear, hear, and renewed applause.) Every piece of calico, Mr. Potter asserted, was at that time taxed 5s. 3d. a piece. That may appear a small sum of money to some of us; but, still, if that tax of 5s. 3d. upon every piece of calico had continued to be levied, Mr. Potter would, he says, have been called upon to contribute to the Exchequer, upon the production of his factory last year, no less a sum than £300,000. (Loud applause.) With the removal of those taxes the trade, in the course of a few years, nearly doubled itself; and now, for one man that was formerly employed in that business, there are one hundred. (Hear, hear.) The goods that Mr. Potter sells are cheaper to the common people of this country than they were, the Exchequer has not been injured, and the commercial and social prosperity of a large section of our people has been advanced. (Applause.) I cite these facts as an illustration of the position that I started with, and I can quote others.

TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

Let us refer for a few moments to a business with which I am directly connected. Our Tory friends imposed, and maintained for a length of years, a tax upon knowledge. The Tories don't like knowledge! (Applause.) They don't like enlightenment! I may almost say because their deeds are evil—(laughter)—political deeds, I mean, and not personal. (Hear, hear, and applause.) They taxed the soap that the workmen had to wash themselves

with, and then accused them of being dirty. (Great laughter and applause.) They taxed the windows of their houses, and then charged them with occupying ill-ventilated and badly lighted dwellings. (Hear, hear, and applause.) They taxed the raw materials of knowledge, and then accused them of ignorance. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I say the Tories maintained to the last those taxes on knowledge. There were three. The tax upon advertisements, the stamp duty upon news, and the tax upon newspapers. Let us look for a few minutes—as long, probably, as the crowded audience, and the uncomfortable position in which you are placed, will permit—let us look more minutely at these three points. They put a tax upon advertisements. Every advertisement that appeared in a newspaper, however small or however large, had to pay to the revenue a tax of 3s. If a poor seamstress wanted a situation, if a governess wished for a place and the extent of her advertisement was only two or three lines, she had to pay a 3s. tax to the Exchequer; but if a wealthy landlord advertised the sale of an estate of the value of £50,000, even though the announcement extended over two or three columns of a newspaper, he paid just the same sum. (Cries of “Shame.”) The injustice, I may almost say the commercial iniquity, of such an imposition was defended to the last by our Tory opponents. (Hear, hear.) That tax has been removed, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Gladstone and the supporters of the Liberal Government. (Loud applause.) Then there was another tax upon news. The report of this meeting will appear to-morrow in the Newcastle papers, and every person who chooses to purchase that report will pay the price of the paper and the cost of its production; but if this meeting had been held some years ago, the parties who purchased that report would not only have been called upon to pay the cost of the paper and the expense of its production, but would have had to pay upon every paper a sum of 4d. in addition. (Hear.) This was necessary because there was a stamp of 4d. upon every newspaper. If, however, the publication of the report were delayed for eight days—by which time the interest of the meeting would probably have passed away, and the object of it have been forgotten to some extent—the tax was removed or lessened. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Gentlemen, the object of the tax was not for the purpose of raising revenue, for it raised but a small amount. The object of the tax upon news was for the purpose of preventing the full dissemination

of political intelligence amongst the people. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) When Mr. Cobbett issued his "Register" and other publications he announced that the cost of its production amounted to 2d. or 3d.; but the price at which it had to be sold, in consequence of the imposts placed upon it by Government, was something like 1s. 2d. or 1s. 3d. I repeat that this tax was not levied for the purpose of revenue—(hear, hear)—but with a view to prevent the extension of intelligence amongst the people. (Cheers.) A Liberal Government, Lord Melbourne's, reduced the stamp duty from 4d. to 1d., and Mr. Gladstone's Government removed the tax entirely. (Hear, hear, and great applause.) Before it was removed, however, it should be said—to the lasting credit of the political reformers of that day—that scores, or rather hundreds of them, were imprisoned in consequence of their refusal to comply with the requirements of the law. (Applause.) Thus fared the second tax upon knowledge. The third was a tax on paper, and that tax, I admit, was for the purpose of revenue. The sum that was realised was considerable, and possibly there was a certain justification in its imposition. If we need revenue we are compelled to have taxes; and a duty on paper might appear to some, who believed in the ethics of taxation as understood at that day, as necessary. But mark! That tax was removed by Mr. Gladstone's Government, or, rather, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. (Cheers.) And I wish to call attention to the opposition that its removal encountered at the hands of our Tory friends. Mr. Gladstone proposed a bill which contained within it certain provisions with respect to the French Treaty and our commercial transactions with our neighbours across the Channel. In that bill he proposed the abolition of the duty on paper. It was not like an ordinary money bill, and, therefore, after being brought before the House of Commons, it had to be sent up to the House of Lords. When it reached that serene assembly—(loud laughter)—the Tories made a successful effort to strike out the clauses relating to the tax on paper. The late Lord Derby—the chosen champion of Tory principles—(groans)—the man who made it a boast that his mission was to oppose the onward strides of democracy, and yet who, as he admitted, to "dish" his political opponents, had the want of principle to give his consent to a bill that achieved the very purpose which it had been, as he confessed, the object of his life to oppose—the late Lord Derby, I say, was successful in his opposition to this measure. Mr. Gladstone proposed the

repeal of the paper duty, and the records of the House of Lords contain a protest by that nobleman against the measure, declaring that by the repeal of the paper duty the country would be flooded with immorality—(laughter)—that the land would be deluged with sedition, that the stability of the crown would be shaken, and that the institutions of the State would be injured. (Renewed laughter and applause.) Gentlemen, I ask you if such has been the result. (No, no, and applause.) This matter, as I said before, is an illustration of the principle which we maintain—that no tax ought to injure trade, or to inflict a certain detriment on the community. (Applause.)

EFFECT OF THE REMOVAL OF THE TAX ON PAPER.

Let us see what has been the effect of removing the tax on paper. Immediately the tax was removed, there was created such an increased demand for paper that it could not be supplied by the ordinary resources of commerce. Paper had up to that time been made from rags and cotton waste, and when the enormously increased demand arose, owing to the repeal of the duty, there was not an adequate supply of those commodities in the country to provide the paper requisite to meet that demand. This result followed—the result that always ensues with the repeal of any tax on commercial enterprise—scientific men, chemists and others, turned their attention to the subject of the paper supply, and endeavoured to find some other commodity besides rags and cotton waste, that might be used as a substitute in its manufacture. Straw was resorted to, but it was found that our ordinary straw was not sufficiently glutinous to make a paper of equal quality to the rag-made article. It was seen, however, by some far seeing men that there grew abundantly by the Mediterranean, in Spain, and in Africa, a rush-like production, which, after undergoing certain chemical processes, was transformed into a pulp suitable for papermaking. Now mark the effect of this discovery! And I would call your special attention to the practical consequences of the discovery. Esparto grass had been grown in Spain for years, but it had never been utilised. Its value had never been known, and it was, therefore, not appreciated. As soon as its properties became patent, and a demand for the grass sprang up in this country, the value of the land in Spain on which it grows, was considerably increased, and the Spanish landlord greatly benefited in consequence. The Spanish peasantry found useful and honourable employment in gathering

the grass and carrying it down to the ships—(applause)—and our English shipowners also found remunerative employment for their vessels in importing it to this country. Again, there are on the confines of the Mediterranean large heaps of material containing lead and silver, that have remained there since the days of the Carthaginians. That people worked the silver and lead mines in the South of Spain as well, perhaps, as the means at their command allowed ; but their chemical knowledge and mechanical appliances were not so extensive and efficient as those in our days, and their attempts to extract silver were scarcely successful. But English chemists, and merchants, and manufacturers have gone to Spain and utilised those large refuse heaps, and we send large quantities of coke from the Tyne for the purpose of smelting the lead and extracting the silver. (Applause.) That branch of industry has given employment to our vessels. Every shipowner knows, however, that lead is a bad cargo ; it is a dead weight, and the ship can't carry a large quantity of it. But this discovery of the properties of Esparto grass has been advantageous to shipowners, inasmuch as it forms a commodity which can be shipped along with lead, and so enable the vessel to carry a full cargo. (Applause.) This, of course, contributes to the freight, and enables the ship-owners to make increased profits. In pursuing the argument further you will find that Esparto grass comes chiefly to the Tyne. Four-fifths or probably five-sixths of the bulk that is imported into this country is imported to this river. Now the North-Eastern Railway Company made a large dock at the mouth of the Tyne ; and I believe my friend Mr. Ald. Bell will bear me out in saying that when that dock was made there were great fears entertained by the North-Eastern Company that they would not be able to find employment for all the appliances that they had provided. But what is the fact ? In consequence of the enormous importation of Esparto grass the dock has been found insufficient to accommodate the business, and it has been extended. The revenue, therefore, of the North-Eastern Railway Company has been handsomely increased ; and some of our Tory friends, who are North-Eastern shareholders, and who are opposing us, have received additional dividends, in consequence of the trade which has been created in Esparto grass. (Laughter and applause.) The chemical trade likewise has participated in the benefit resulting from this new industry. In the conversion of the grass into pulp, various chemicals are used, in the proportion, I believe, of two tons of chemicals to one ton of Esparto. The demand upon the chemical

manufacturers for this purpose has, therefore, increased their business, and, in doing that, has also tended to swell the commercial and industrial advantages which the repeal of the paper duty has conferred upon the country. (Applause.) The indirect removal of that duty then, by creating this Esparto grass trade, has benefited, first, the Spanish landowner; next, the Spanish peasant; then the English shipowner—even though he be a Tory, like Mr. Milvain—(loud laughter)—then the chemical manufacturers, and the North-Eastern Railway shareholders. (Applause.) These are the indirect results of the removal of this tax. And now let us look at the direct effects upon the increased distribution of knowledge. For every man that was formerly engaged in the printing business of this country there are now nearly a hundred. (Applause.) The art of journalism that was almost unknown in the provinces has now become a large and thriving profession; and men of ability and culture, who formerly looked to the Church or the law, or some other of the learned professions, now find useful and honourable labour in connection with newspapers. (Applause.) We have seen distributors of news spring up in all corners of our towns and villages; and even the small children in our streets—the peripatetic newsagents—have been able to add to the little comforts that they can procure in their dismal and forbidding homes. Here I would ask you, in your mind's eye, to try and realise the direct, material, moral, and intellectual consequences of that wise course of legislation pursued by the Liberal Government of this country. (Applause.) And remember, at the same time, that the removal of all those taxes was resisted by the Tory party, with an energy and determination that did not characterise their resistance to the removal of other taxes. But, gentlemen, the direct result has not been simply the multiplication of newspapers. It has led to a largely extended demand for all descriptions of useful knowledge on political, scientific, and religious subjects. Publications of all kinds are now leaping from the press and spreading the views of enlightenment and liberty to the darkest corners of the earth. (Renewed applause.) During this last year there have been issued in this country in every walk of literature no fewer than 5,000 new books, or good reprints of old works, nearly three times as many as in the year preceding the removal of those taxes. Consider the mental impetus, the moral effect, that the distribution of this intelligence has had upon the country, and then you will be able to properly estimate

the worth and wisdom of the course of legislation that I am endeavouring, to impress upon you to-night. (Applause.)

THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

Gentlemen, our friends amongst the commercial classes are sometimes disposed—many of them at least, not all, I know—to criticise adversely the proceedings of Mr. Gladstone's Government within the last few years. There is a censorious or hypercritical tone prevailing amongst certain well-to-do sections of the community with regard to the Liberal Government and Liberal principles that I think does not do credit to their intelligence or their generosity. Gentlemen, it is too often the case that when a man in humble circumstances advances in life, he forgets the people whom he left behind, and the early circumstances which surrounded him. We have heard of men using certain persons as ladders to mount from a humble to an elevated position, and when they have secured the position they aimed at, they have kicked from beneath them the ladder that enabled them to rise. I tell the censorious and hypercritical Liberals of this country and neighbourhood that they owe their present commercial prosperity to the policy of the Liberal Government. If that policy had not been pursued their position would not have been what it now is. Look at the large industrial populations which throng this locality, which are to be found studded over the face of Durham and Northumberland, and the whole North of England. Look at this grand valley of the Tyne, darkened as it is by the smoke of many factories; its natural beauties probably blemished, but containing beneath that darkened atmosphere the elements of great material and moral activity! It has been placed in this position mainly, if not entirely, by the legislative procedure that I am now commending to you. (Loud applause.) If we had not had this Liberal legislation, these large factories and this prosperous condition could not have existed. (Applause.) I will ask you to remember one or two figures illustrative of that position. The imports of this country the year before the enactment of Free Trade amounted to £62,000,000. That was the value of the imports of the United Kingdom in 1845. The value of the imports last year was £355,000,000—(great cheering)—an increase nearly equal to six times as much in 1872 as in 1845. And then the average amount of money paid by the population for imported goods in 1845 was £2 7s. 6½d. per head, but the average amount for the year 1872 was £11 2s. 10d. The amount of our exports in 1845 was

£110,128,716 ; in 1872, the amount was £315,000,000 ; and while the average value per head of the population for our exports was £1 18s. 9d. in 1845, it was £8 1s. in 1872. (Cheers.) The amount of imports and exports together, in 1845, was something like £6 10s. per head, whereas it was £21 0s. 6d. per head in 1872. Indeed, the commerce of this country is almost incalculable. Ordinary men can scarcely realize the figures when they hear them repeated. There is no nation of the world in ancient or modern times that ever approached it. We have almost the entire carrying trade of the earth at our command, and when the wise legislation initiated by Mr. Gladstone in commercial matters is extended—as I believe it will be if we support Mr. Gladstone's Government—I do not hesitate to predict that this country will become the commercial depot for the entire civilized world. (Loud cheers.) The area of our empire is 4,500,000 square miles, with 235,000,000 of population ; the revenue of our dependencies is £148,000,000, and the value of the commerce of that enormous aggregate of territory is £800,000,000 per annum, while the tonnage of our ships is equal to 68,000,000. I repeat, gentlemen, that these figures tend to confirm the statement which I started with, namely, that the commercial prosperity we enjoy has been the result of wise and liberal legislation. The man who denies this would not be convinced even if one spoke from a higher authority. (Cheers.)

PARTY TRIMMING.

During the last few days, our opponents have been telling you that they were very warm admirers of the personal character and political principles of your late member. We have been assured by Mr. Hamond's chairman, and by himself, that at previous elections they recorded their votes on behalf of my father. I can scarcely perceive the political consistency of such a course. My father, if he was anything, was a Radical : those men, if they are anything, are Tories. How they could allow their Tory convictions to go to the support of a Radical politician is more than I can conceive, and more than I can admire. I fear there is a disposition on the part of our friends, I will not say to exaggerate, but to some extent to extol the political principles of the member that was with a view to censure the political principles of the member that is to be. (Hear, hear, laughter, and rounds of cheering.) Gentlemen, it is impossible for me to please everyone. I would never attempt it—(hear, hear,)—for to do so would place me in a

position similar to that of the old man with the ass, in the fable. (Laughter.) I am not a weathercock, that is blown about by every wind of doctrine. (Great cheering.) I am not a political chameleon who changes his colour according to the colour of the parties addressing him. I have fixed and defined political principles—(cheers)—and have ever advocated them consistently, and with what earnestness I was able to bring to bear upon them, all my life; and I believe that the knowledge of that consistency is a better passport to the respect of my fellow-citizens than any trimming—(immense cheering)—either to catch votes here or save votes yonder. (Loud cheers.) I believe that it would be as I said—impossible for any man to please all parties. In a large constituency like this there must be a very great difference of opinion, and my claim, as far as I am the representative of the Liberal party, is this that I am fairly speaking the average Liberal sentiment of the inhabitants of this town. (Cheers.) I wish, however, that so far as I am concerned in this controversy, I may be nothing and nobody, but the cause I represent, everything. (Hear, hear.) By accident, to a great extent, and from the too kindly regard of my neighbours, I have been chosen as standard-bearer for the Liberal flag on this occasion, and all I can say is, that I shall bear the flag with what dignity and honour I am capable of. (Loud cheers.) I am, however, in the place where duty and honour require me to speak what I believe to be the truth; and I will speak it, let who will list; and I will speak it “though every tile in Newcastle were a Conservative devil.” (Loud cheering.) There are those of our friends in other parts of the country who have been disheartened by the onward progress of a certain Conservative reaction that they feel to be spreading over the land. I do not believe in that Conservative reaction. (Loud cheers.) I am satisfied that if the special cases were investigated it would be found that there were local circumstances which contributed in many instances to the defeat of the Liberal candidate.

NORTHERN POLITICIANS.

There is no evidence to show that the intelligent Liberals of the country have lost heart in their cause, or faith in their principles; but whatever be the cause, and however it may be, I hope that Newcastle will be true to her colours—that this contest here will be, if I may so use the term, the new Thermopylæ which will resist the encroachments of that Tory tide of reaction

and aggression. (Loud cheers.) Remember that we have a political reputation to maintain; for when Great Britain counts her muster roll of worthies there are many men sprung from this district who will rank in high places on that roll. There are many men, identified with the political thought of this district, and this section of the country—an honour to us from whom they have sprung—that have shed glory upon our common country. It was from here, gentlemen, that the distinguished statesman who carried the first Reform Bill, sprang. In Lord Grey we had not, probably, an advanced politician as we estimate that term to-day, but in him we had a pure and incorruptible public man; a man who went honestly and earnestly in favour of political progress, and a man to whom we and all Liberal Englishmen are under deep and lasting obligation. (Cheers.) We had, too, in our neighbouring county, a distinguished political leader whose name is still held sacred in Tyneside homes. The name of John George Lambton (cheers)—is a name which has not yet lost its power to conjure with. I appeal to you in memory of his services to our good cause, and the principles he espoused; in memory of his sacrifices for Liberal principles; I appeal to your recollection of these, and ask you to stand firmly by the cause on this occasion; to wrestle well and ably with your opponents, and never allow it to be said that this great metropolis of the north-east ever gave an uncertain sound upon an issue so vital to the interests of the nation, and so fraught with importance to the welfare of mankind at large. (Cheers.)

NEED OF POLITICAL EARNESTNESS.

If we are in earnest we shall win; but if we flag our opponents may make certain inroads on our position. I appeal, then, to the Liberal electors of Newcastle, and the working men as a body, to sustain—not me, not the individual that is addressing you, but the broad Liberal principles that I represent. (Cheers.) The instructions that our great Protector gave to his officers when raising recruits for his army of Ironsides was that they were to “get God-fearing men who made a conscience of the matter.” (Loud cheers.) Guided by that principle, they raised a rough, a rude, but a noble army: one of the strangest, but one of the bravest, that ever bore aloft the banner of independence. With Bible and broadsword in the same girdle the consciences of these men more than their powers of physical resistance, decided the fortunes of their fight. In earlier times, when

the representatives of another community reached the crusade against Islam, they enforced the same conviction on the first soldiers of the Cross. In later days another man of that communion proclaimed liberty of conscience for mankind at large, and incited men to rise and break the cements in which the human mind had been for ages involved, and the principles which he prescribed to his followers were embraced in these words—earnestness and sincerity! (Cheers.) And thus, gentlemen, it has been the world over. Among the adherents of every creed, and the sons of every clime, the men that have been faithful and earnest, and these alone, have permanently prospered. Intellect, however dazzling; power, even of the most over-reaching kind, are as nothing without it. Sincerity is the basis of every virtue, and the true secret of all success. Let us be faithful, then, as Socrates was when he drank the hemlock dregs! Faithful as the brave Columbus, when he outstrode the broad Atlantic! Faithful as was the Apostolic Howard, when he carried messages of mercy into the cells of the condemned! Faithful as the early Christians were to the One crucified! Faithful as the gallant Greeks that leapt from Sula's rock rather than return to slavery! Faithful as that gallant Swiss who gathered a sheaf of lances in his heart to make a lane for freedom! (Immense cheering.) Gentlemen, I am willing to be your Winkeldeide on this occasion, and will gather the shafts of Tory ridicule and partisan feeling into my breast, if over my prostrate body the Liberals of Newcastle will march to victory and triumph. (Loud cheering.) For

Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.



SPEECH III.

[*Co-operative Hall, St. Anthony's, January 2nd, 1874.*]

THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE—THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE—POST OFFICE
TELEGRAPHS — EXPENDITURE OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT — TORY
BLUNDERING—UNFAIR ESTIMATES OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT—THE
METHOD OF TAXATION.

Mr. COWEN, whose rising was the signal for a most enthusiastic outburst of applause, said he had no wish to criticise the proceedings of

THE OPPOSING CANDIDATE

in the present election. Mr. Hamond pursued a certain course of action, and he (Mr. Cowen) pursued another; and he supposed they followed the plan which approved itself best to each of them. He must, however, complain that he had so little opportunity of commenting upon his opponent's principles. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Hamond had been, practically, a candidate for the vacant seat more than ten days—almost a fortnight—and yet he believed that that gentleman had never appeared before the constituency at all in any public meeting. All they had heard of his opinions had been through an address which he had published some days ago—an address that only contained one or two explicit statements. In the first place, Mr. Hamond intimated that he would support an Established Church; and next that he would maintain the 25th clause in the Education Act. He also gave a pretty broad indication that he would promote legislation in favour of the views entertained on the Licensing Act by the Licensed victuallers generally throughout the country. These were three explicit statements; but the address, otherwise, was somewhat vague and ambiguous. (Hear, hear). Now, as he had said, he had no wish to comment upon his opponent's course of action, but he did think that the best

thing for a candidate in a contested election was to appear as frequently as possible before the constituency, to state his opinions as frankly and clearly as he possibly could, and to give every man interested in the election an opportunity of asking questions, of criticising his opinions as a candidate, and of learning fully and in detail the views he was prepared to expound and support should he be sent as a representative to Parliament. (Applause). Mr. Hamond, so far as he knew, had announced himself—in the first place, at least—as a candidate on his own responsibility. He possessed, no doubt, a belief that he was capable of representing the borough, and of reflecting the views of the electors; and hence he had intimated his willingness to be sent to Parliament. It was perfectly legitimate for any man to follow such a course of action. So far as he was himself concerned, however, he stood in a somewhat different position. (Hear, hear). The Liberal party took the question into their own hands; and they made it a public, a party question, not an individual one. They called a public meeting, at which to select their candidate, and the nomination of that public meeting had fallen on himself. (Loud cheers). The thing was done openly and above board—(hear, hear)—and since that time his only anxiety had been to make his views as fully and clearly understood by the people of Newcastle as he possibly could. (Applause). The Jews, he thought, complained that they could not make bricks without straw. He could scarcely comment upon the opinions of his opponent in this contest unless he had some more definite and lengthened exposition of his views than was to be found in the address to which he had alluded. Still there was one clause in that address which might properly form the text for a few observations.

THE NATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

Mr. Hamond, he believed, had asserted that the national expenditure under the present Government was large and increasing. Now, in reply to this, he would endeavour to show that Mr. Hamond was somewhat misinformed. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He must admit, at once and frankly, that the expenditure of this country was large. It ought to be reduced, and he thought it would be reduced if the present political party held office for any length of time. (Renewed applause.) He wished as a matter of fairplay to the Liberal party, and to Mr. Gladstone's Government especially, to put a few facts before the audience and the people of Newcastle,

so that they might understand the question thoroughly and completely. The nominal expenditure of this country was upwards of £79,000,000 a year, it might be a million, or two, or three, more or less, just as circumstances occurred ; but, substantially, it was about seventy millions. This amount might be some three, four, five or even ten millions more than the national expenditure was, nominally, some years ago ; and yet, really, when the thing was investigated, he thought he should be able to show that the expenditure was practically less than it was then. (Hear, hear, and applause.) There were many modes of keeping cash accounts, and of keeping books ; and it was possible that by an alteration in the mode of keeping a set of books, a very different result might be arrived at, so far as a mere aggregate of expenditure and income was concerned. Now, the national book-keeping in this country had not been very clear in past years. The accounts, indeed, had been kept in a somewhat confused and muddled manner, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that any man could clearly understand the absolute amount of our income and expenditure. Amongst other reforms which they had seen effected within the last ten or twenty years, had been a great improvement in the work of national book-keeping. It had not been brought publicly before the attention of the country. It was scarcely a subject which interested the population generally, therefore many of them might not be acquainted with the fact. It arose in this way. The two largest instrumentalities for collecting taxes in this country were the customs and the excise. In past times it was the practice to collect a certain revenue from the customs, and there was returned a large sum—a large gross sum ; but before the customs authorities returned this to the exchequer they deducted the cost of its collection. This cost, which was considerable, was deducted before the amount of that revenue was placed on the budget. The same remark applied with respect to the Inland Revenue or Excise. Only one sum appeared on the national accounts, being the nett sum which resulted from that department of the State. Now this was not a very clear or satisfactory state of affairs, and hence he was glad to say that one of the reforms effected was this—the gross amount collected under the excise and the customs was on one side of the account, and the cost of collection on the other. (Hear, hear.) In this way the people of this country, the members of Parliament, and all others interested in the question, could understand clearly the gross amount collected, and the exact cost of its collection. (Applause). It would be manifest to all present that, by

such a process, the income would be nominally increased, as also would the expenditure, yet really and practically there was not necessarily any increase at all. (Hear, hear, A large amount of information was by this means conveyed to the public ; and although the figures on both sides were augmented, yet practically the result, so far as the people are concerned, was not different. (Applause.) Again there were also large sums of money paid in this country for judicial and legal administration. It used to be the custom in many of our law courts—both in the Chancery courts and the common law courts—for a large sum of money to be got in the shape of fees of different kinds of special work, and the judges got those fees, and kept them, as perquisites in addition to their income. The consequence was that the nation and the public at large did not know the actual sum of money they were paying for such services. The result of Liberal legislation, however, had been this—that now the total revenue derived from these law courts got into the national accounts in the shape of fees and other items, and the nett amount paid in the shape of salaries was made to appear clearly on the other side. (Applause.) This made a difference on that account alone of something like £1,000,000 a year. The same thing happened in respect to county courts. At one time there were a large number of charges which the county court judges got and kept. The nation had no record of them whatever ; but now, by the altered state of keeping our accounts, those charges were all accounted for in the budget, and the expenses of working county courts were made much more explicit, and carried out in much more detail. (Applause.) Then, under another head, a great change had taken place. As many of them would be aware, the Government paid a considerable sum of money for the conveyance of mails to the East Indies, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere. They paid large subsidies every year to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, and other commercial concerns of a similar character. It used to be the custom that all that appeared in the annual accounts was the simple sum of money which the Imperial exchequer paid for the conveyance of their letters. Now a change had taken place, and the result was that the whole sum for the conveyance of letters newspapers, and other articles to the furthest corner of the earth—the whole sum realised for that sort of work—appeared on one side of the national accounts, and the sums paid to the various companies for doing the work, on the other. Well, there was a difference of £150,000 in that way. (Hear, hear.) Another item

illustrating the same thing was this : that in the Inland Revenue department there used to be a set of stamps issued which brought to the country a sum of £50,000. By the changes made in the last few years this £50,000 had been altered to £600,000, as the receipts from this department. Substantially, the nation had not been benefited to that extent, but the mere change in the keeping of accounts showed a difference of between £50,000 and £600,000. (Hear, hear.)

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

These, however, were comparatively trifling alterations when put in contrast with two others that he would mention in connection with the management of the post-office. They would doubtless be aware that within the last few years the post-office department had been largely extended. (Applause.) In addition to the mere conveyance of letters, the post-office had now charge of the telegraphs. A few years ago, there were three independent telegraph companies in existence in Great Britain—the Electric, the Irish Magnetic, and the United Kingdom. All these companies were bought up by the Government, and the Government was now the owner of all the telegraph lines and stations in the country. The result of this change had been somewhat marked also. Before the telegraphs were conveyed to the Government, the expenditure on the post-office was only £2,000,000 a year ; but now it stood as high as £5,000,000, or £3,000,000 more than it used to be. (Hear, hear, and loud applause.) Then a further item of expenditure—one which redounds to the lasting honour of our times, and one which they ought to be proud of rather than otherwise—was the largely-increased sums of money that they were now called upon to pay annually for the education of the people. They now paid yearly, or it appeared in the Budget yearly, a sum of above £1,000,000—nearly £2,000,000—more for national education than they did a few years ago. (Applause.) In talking, therefore, about the increased expenditure of this country, he thought it was only fair to recollect these circumstances. (Hear, hear, and applause.) It was only right as an act of justice to remember that there had been a change in the mode of book-keeping ; that the assets of the nation had been greatly increased, at least so far as appeared on the face of the accounts ; and that the expenditure had also been increased. In talking, therefore, of national expenditure, he thought these facts ought to be borne in mind. (Hear, hear.)

EXPENDITURE OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

But, apart from all this, and setting these matters on one side, he must say this—that during the Government of the Liberal party in this country there had been a steady decrease in the absolute expenditure. (Loud applause.) And he must also make this accusation, further, that, during the few years the Tories were in office, there had been a considerable increase. (Hear, hear, and renewed applause.) As Burns had well said—

“Facts are chiels that winna ding,
And downa be disputed.”

The Liberal Government entered upon office in 1859, but it was not practically till 1860, so far as the mere statement of figures was concerned, that it really came into operation. Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister, and Mr. Gladstone was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that Government existed from 1859 to 1866. The expenditure during that time was decreased yearly. But it was better that he should make this explanation: There were certain sums in our national expenditure that were fixed—for example, the payments for the ordinary governmental affairs of the State, such as the payment of Ministers and officials of the Government, and expenses attending the cost of the Crown. And there were other arrangements of that kind that were fixed, in addition to the money that we annually paid for the interest of the national debt. These sums, they must see, did not vary; they were permanent: they existed as much under one Government as they did under another. There were, however, three branches of expenditure on which there was an opportunity of reducing or decreasing, according to the economy, or wisdom, or carefulness, of the parties who had charge of the national purse; these were the military and naval expenditure, and the ordinary civil service expenditure. Now, during the years Mr. Gladstone was the Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Government to which he had referred, the expenditure under these heads—the military, naval, and civil services, and the interest on the national debt—amounted to £58,104,000, that being the average expenditure at that time. In 1866, when Lord Russell was in power, the Liberal Government was upset by a sort of desertion of some of the Liberal members—the Adullamites, as they would recollect, who changed to the Tory side, and upset the Government, the Tories coming into office in the latter end of 1866, and remaining in office until 1868. During the first six months of their existence as a Government, they increased the

national expenditure by £1,400,000. Stated, in round numbers, these were the figures:—In 1859, when Mr. Gladstone became Chancellor of the Exchequer, the average expenditure of the Liberal Government on the departments it could control was £38,200,000; and from 1860 to 1866 they reduced the expenditure of this country, roughly speaking, by £7,000,000, or by more than £1,000,000 a year, bringing it down to £31,200,000. (Applause.) Then, as he had already stated, Mr. Disraeli came into office in 1866, remaining in power until 1868; and during these two years the expenditure was £34,700,000 an increase of £3,500,000. (Loud applause.) He asked them, therefore, to contrast the course of procedure of these two Governments—the Liberal Government in five years reducing the expenditure by £7,000,000, and the Tory Government, during its two years of office, positively increasing it by £3,500,000. (Renewed applause.) But the Tories were displaced again in 1868, when Mr. Gladstone once more came into office. There had been a considerable change in the expenditure since then, though the Government had laboured under very great difficulties. They knew that three years ago a very desperate war had broken out between France and Germany; and what very often happened when a war did take place on the Continent, large numbers of people in this country had been terrified lest we would be involved in it. The result of that panic, if he might so term it, was a “cry” upon the Government for an increase in the naval and military forces of this land. In compliance with this species of panic, which took place in 1870, the House of Commons ordered an expenditure of upwards of £2,000,000—an expenditure which he thought was unnecessary—for improving the military and naval resources of the land. (Hear, hear.) Then, within the last two years, since that expenditure had been made, as they were all aware, there had been a large increase in the cost of all public works: the wages that were paid to all classes of workmen were very much augmented, and the cost of material was greatly increased. Coal, as they knew, had risen largely in price; and timber, iron, and other commodities, had increased in like proportion. As the Government was one of the largest employers of labour in the land, they could very easily conceive their wage bill every fortnight or month must be much larger than it was before. It came within their own practical experience that such had been the effect; and as every man had felt the effect of the rise in prices, it was only reasonable, therefore, to take into account the amount of extra

money the Government had had to pay in this direction. (Applause.) He asked them, therefore, to remember that during the time Mr. Gladstone's Government had existed since 1868, up to the present year, these circumstances had added greatly to the expenditure of the country—the increased cost of material and the £2,000,000 that had resulted from the panic in 1870 in connection with the Franco-German war. Notwithstanding these things, still he ought to say, as a mere matter of political justice, that during Mr. Lowe's administration—who had been very much abused, very unjustly abused, though that statesman was not a man for whom in many respects he had a very strong admiration—he had kept a strict watch over the national purse, and had done his best to save the people's pockets. Mr. Lowe had brought forward five budgets during the time he had been in office, and it was to Mr. Lowe's lasting credit that he had taken off no less a sum than £9,000,000 from the taxation of the people, £5,300,000 of that amount being taken off food—sugar, tea, coffee, and other commodities. (Applause.) He therefore asserted that during the years Mr. Gladstone's Government had been in office, notwithstanding the difficulties of the circumstances in which they had been placed, they had reduced the annual national expenditure on these three heads, military, naval, and civil, by £2,300,000; and, in addition to this, they not only reduced the National Debt by £25,000,000, but paid £10,000,000 for the purchase of the telegraphs, which had proved an excellent investment. (Applause.)

TORY BLUNDERING.

Now that had been the course of the Liberals! What had been the course of the Tories? They had increased the national expenditure, and had not taken off one single shilling from the taxes of the people. On the contrary, they had augmented the Income-tax 2d. in the pound. It was quite true—and he would give them the full benefit of the statement—that the 2d. was for a special purpose. They had become involved in a very stupid and unnecessary war with that poor African savage, the King of Abyssinia, and we had had to pay the 2d. in the pound on our incomes that they might engage in a war to save the honour or safety of this country, or its dependencies in the East. Mr. Disraeli, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, estimated that the war would be carried on and finished for the sum of £2,000,000, or at most £3,000,000. Now, the result practically had been that instead of the Abyssinian war costing £2,000,000 or £3,000,000, it had cost

£9,000,000, and Mr. Gladstone's Government had had to pay the larger share of this sum, which had been left as a legacy to them. (Loud applause.) Mr. Disraeli, they would remember, had written a very stinging letter the other day to his "Dear Grey," the member for Bath, in which he had indulged in some very hard expressions at the expense of Mr. Gladstone's Government, about their "plundering and blundering." Now, he wished to appeal to the facts of the case, and ask, when Mr. Disraeli talked about plundering and blundering, whether he had forgotten the management of the Tory Government in the Abyssinian expedition? There never was in the history of this country a larger measure of blundering or miscalculation than there was in that expedition some few years ago. (Applause.) Horses were sent to the African coast without men to attend them, without food to feed them, and without harness, and bridles, and saddles, and the other requisites for the purpose of their management. (Applause.) These animals had run wild in the coast of Africa, and were lost to the nation. The Government sent out unground or unroasted coffee, and there was all the blundering, intensified tenfold, which made what had taken place in the harbour of Balaklava a password for confusion and disorder. (Applause.) Notwithstanding the experiences of the Crimean war, the proceedings of the Tory Government in organising the Abyssinian expedition was simply a repetition, with all the worst features intensified, of what had occurred in the first event. (A Voice: "That is true; I have been through the whole of it.") (Applause.) He was glad to have a personal confirmation of the fact. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Therefore, he said that the statement of his opponent, Mr. Hamond, in his present address was scarcely borne out by the facts. Mr. Hamond said that the expenditure of this country under the Liberal Government was large and increasing. Unquestionably it could be replied that the expenditure was large, and that there was great need of its reduction; but he would say this, and it was to the lasting credit of the Liberal Government, that there had been a steady and determined effort on their part to make a reduction. (Applause.) He would say also that during the short period the Tories had been in office there had been a steady attempt on their part to increase the expenditure. (Renewed applause.)

UNFAIR ESTIMATES OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

He thought that the Government had really not had justice done to it in this matter. There had been a dead set against Mr.

Gladstone's Administration on this point; and some of the Liberals had defended the Government in a very half-hearted manner, while some of their opponents had spoken of it in a way that was not warranted by the facts. (Hear, hear.) They could easily understand, for example, that when Mr. Lowe, or Mr. Goschen or Mr. Childers, or the head of any department, set about the re-organising of any office, that a number of vested interests would be disturbed. Men occupying offices which they probably had imagined were permanent or sinecures would in all likelihood have great objections to any alteration being made. They had in consequence created a considerable disturbance. There had been a general feeling throughout the country that was unquestionably hostile to the Government in its attempts at a reduction. The annual expenditure of former Governments on naval affairs was £11,500,000, but Mr. Childer's vigorous administration of the department had reduced the sum by £1,500,000, notwithstanding the increased expenditure for coals, iron, and higher wages. (Applause.) Under Mr. Goschen's administration fully £1,000,000 per annum had been maintained as the reduction on the department. (Renewed applause.) He thought, therefore, that they should recollect these facts to the credit of the Government, and that when Mr. Hamond accused the Government of increasing the expenditure they should be able to point to the figures as a refutation of his statement. (Applause). For his part he believed that this question of taxation did not receive that attention from the public which it ought to have. (Hear, hear.) We were tolerably prosperous at the present. A large measure of industrial success had attended this country within the last few years. Men, as a rule, were more comfortably off than they had been, and they were indifferent as to their expenditure. It very often happened to be the case that when a man was in comfortable circumstances he was less careful of the shillings and pence at his disposal. (Hear, hear.) He believed that had been the case with us as a nation, as well as with the individual. But he was satisfied of this—that no nation could be permanently strong in all its departments unless in the administration of its financial and other affairs it paid strict regard to the economy of officials. (Applause.)

THE METHOD OF TAXATION.

Now, his impression was—of course there might be various views on this subject—distinctly in favour of direct taxation. (Applause.) He was satisfied that if the people of the country

were to pay the taxes directly they would be much more anxious to understand how they were expended than they were now. When they paid taxes in an indirect manner, as in the duties levied by the Customs on tea, coffee, or sugar, they were unconscious of the amount of money they were contributing as taxes. (Applause.) All our municipal taxes were collected directly; and they understood when they were contributing so much for the borough rate and so much for the School Board rate. It was a direct appeal to them for a certain sum of money for specified purposes. The Government practically taxed articles of food, and the sums being small, the people, not being conscious of it, allowed the money to be expended in an extravagant and foolish manner. (Applause.) If they had direct taxation, he was certain that they would look more sharply after it, and would be more exacting in their criticisms of our national expenditure. (Applause.) It was his impression that every man in this country who enjoys the advantage of a stable Constitution should pay a certain sum to its support. We were defended from foreign war and social disorder, and for the defence from foreign aggression and social disorder every poor man as well as rich man ought to pay equally. He would also tax every man on the realised property he possessed. (Applause.) By these simple and expeditious means they would arrive at a much more satisfactory result. The practical issue of it would be that the mode of collecting the taxes would be much easier, much simpler, and not nearly so expensive, and the result would be a more lively interest in national affairs. The commerce of this country was large and extended. It reached with outstretched arms to every corner of the globe. In former times, Tyre, Carthage, and Rome were the greatest commercial centres of the world; and in the middle ages we had Spain, Portugal, and Holland. But now it was England! Her commercial resources and wealth, and the power she exercised through that wealth, were as great as all the others put together. Her influence for good was enormous; and he believed that her power was generally wielded for the advantage of mankind. (Applause.) He was satisfied that if we had entirely free ports and indirect taxes removed, and had such a system of taxation as he had briefly indicated initiated in this country, our power for good would be greatly extended. (Applause.) The influence they exercised on the progress of mankind would be felt in future years with an impetus and a power that we had never yet seen in the world. Whilst possessing Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and

with a Liberal Government, they might, he was satisfied, reasonably hope for an approximation to these views. (Applause.) They might not get them all—he did not suppose they would. He was a very extravagant man, and a very unwise man, who imagined that he would see realised in his time all the political speculations on which he set his mind; but he believed they would see a steady advance towards the attainment of the views he had endeavoured to indicate. (Applause.) If the people of Newcastle should send him to Parliament, he would consistently and persistently insist upon the adoption of the line of policy he had indicated. (Applause.) He concluded by contrasting the policies of the Liberal and Tory parties; and showed how the first allowed government by the people through their representatives, while the second, in the manner in which the rich gave alms to the poor, sought to govern for the people—giving now and then a lollipop or a toy. (Laughter and applause.) He objected to this, believing that the people should manage their own affairs; and for this reason he was in favour of Liberalism, and opposed to Toryism. (Cheers.)

A motion having been carried approving of Mr. Cowen as a “fit and proper person to represent the borough of Newcastle in Parliament,” he continued to say that he was not present in his individual capacity. As a mere matter of choice he should have been glad to have been relieved from this contest. His friends, who were well acquainted with his feelings, wishes, inclinations, and tastes, knew that Parliamentary ambition was not in his line. He had never had a disposition to go into Parliament; he had always been strongly opposed to it; but the Liberal party of Newcastle had selected him as their candidate, and he should fight the battle with all the energy and determination he could. (Cheers.) If he should lose—which was just possible, for there was nothing so uncertain as political contests, and he had been long enough engaged in political life to know that men in this country and elsewhere had often been disappointed and grieved at the result of their efforts—he trusted that his defeat would only nerve them to still greater efforts in the future. He had faith in the truth; he believed in the righteousness of their cause; and he had confidence in a better and brighter future. (Applause.) He had that confidence because he had faith in the principles of Liberalism. He was satisfied that, even if they were temporarily defeated, victory must ultimately be with them. The cause they were fighting was the cause of freedom, progress, and enlightenment; and although there might be temporary drawbacks, as Mr.

Gladstone had said during the great debate on the Reform Bill, "Time was on their side." (Cheers.) Their opponents had pointed them to the good old times that had past. For his part, he had no belief in those good old times except as sentimental expressions. (Laughter and applause). They were times that were surrounded with slavery and degradation. They had been told of the glories of the ancient governments of the world, but they must understand that these were the glories of priests and rulers; the masses of the people were slaves. (Hear, hear). The progress of humanity and civilisation now depended on the conquests of the material interests of the world. They had made themselves masters of wind and weather; they had conquered both time and distance. All these were indications of the mental, moral, and intellectual progress of mankind, and he was satisfied that conjointly with it, and surrounding and sustaining it, must be the moral and mental progress of the people. The future, therefore, would be better than the past had been, and he could scarcely think that the decadence which had overcome the great empires of antiquity, Rome, Greece, Carthage, and others, would ever overtake this nation. (Applause). With a free people, an intelligent and moral people, he was satisfied that the star of our common country would not set, but that, brilliant though it had been in the past, it would be still more brilliant in the future. (Loud cheers).



SPEECH IV.

[*Glassmaker's Arms, St. Peter's, January 2nd, 1874.*]

Mr. COWEN said that he desired that evening to give them an opportunity of asking him questions upon any subject on which they might desire his opinion rather than to make a set speech. He had delivered so many addresses upon political topics that it was difficult to find fresh ideas, or even to clothe old ideas in new words. He had no wish to go to Parliament under any disguise. (Applause). He should feel humiliated if any man were to vote for him at the coming election under a misapprehension as to his views; and it must also be a source of regret afterwards, to any one who disapproved of his principles, should they give him their support. He therefore wished every one clearly to understand the policy he should advocate were he returned to Parliament; and while such meetings as they were then holding afforded the opportunity for informing themselves as to his opinions, they might also be of some service as a means of political education. An election contest was a season of turmoil and excitement, and often occasioned much inconvenience; still he could not conceive of any man not discharging his obligations to the State. The State was their father; to it they, as a nation, owed everything—their liberties and their opportunities of engaging in trade and commerce. They ought to be doubly proud of a nation whose renown in arts, in science, in literature, and all that contributed to national greatness and prosperity had been unequalled by any other people that he knew of.

“ Her march is o’er the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep.”

(Loud applause.) He hoped wherever England carried on her commerce she would carry civilization, prosperity, and peace. (Renewed applause.) That ought to be the object of all men, and whatever the result of the present contest—whether he or his

opponent should be the man of their choice—he hoped no ill nature would be occasioned by the controversy, and that all would come out of it strengthened by the wrestling of the minds and intellects that were engaged in it. The institutions of a nation were practically the clothes of a nation. A human being without clothes was in an incomplete condition according to the usages of civilized society, and the same was to be said of a nation without institutions. Now, the father of a family would adapt the clothes of his children to their age and requirements. When the child was of tender years he would put on petticoats and bibs and tuckers; but when he grew up to, say 15 or 16 years of age, it would be grotesque to put upon him the same apparel. The lad would then want clothing adapted to his advanced age and altered circumstances, and so it was with the institutions of the country. In the earlier stages of a nation's existence the institutions were of a very primitive order—of a *very* primitive order—of a very slight and frail description; but as civilization advanced and as society developed, it was necessary for the well-being of the State that the institutions should be more complex and better adapted to the improved condition of the people. It was his opinion that, as the material resources, industrial operations, and scientific pursuits of the people were constantly expanding and advancing, and as new fields of thought and labour were being opened out, it was absolutely necessary that the institutions of the country should be improved and adapted to these altered circumstances, in the same way that clothes were provided suitable for the child's growth and advancement, instead of his being compelled to continue wearing the same apparel that was fitted for his more infantile days. (Applause.) This was the opinion of the Liberals. The Tories thought differently. (Laughter.) He did not for a moment speak disrespectfully of their motives. He had no doubt their Conservative friends were as patriotic and sincere in their motives as the Liberals, and he respected their motives and intentions. But what he did say was, that Tories had a wrong conception of the requirements of the State. They were anxious to clothe the nation in the legislative habiliments that were only fitted for a period long gone past. They wanted to have the institutions of to-day the same as they were 50 or 100 years past. (Laughter and applause.) But the Liberals, on the other hand, desired to alter the clothes, or, in other words, the governmental organization of the State in accordance with the requirements and growing strength of the people. (Applause.) That policy was plainly and simply put, and he hoped also intelligently put, as the

issue between the Liberals and their Tory opponents. The former wished to alter the institutions of the country as circumstances required; their friends, the Tories, on the other hand, wished to keep them in the same condition as before—[a voice: In the shackles—laughter]—practically in shackles. (Laughter and applause.) In this country there had been great development of late years in our national resources and wealth. He had stated a few evenings ago that within the last 52 years the export trade of the country had increased something like 400 per cent. (Applause.) There was something like 40 times as much trade, bulk and value considered, now as what there was 100 years ago. (Loud applause.) The internal trade had increased in much the same proportion. Now alongside of all this increased trade there had been increased domestic and personal comfort and prosperity. The wages of the artizan class had been augmented within a comparatively short time, in some cases as much as from 20 to 100 per cent. At any rate, it might be fairly said that, on the average, wages had been advanced 40 or 50 per cent. On the other hand it was only fair to add that some articles of consumption had advanced in the same proportion. Coals were dearer, flesh meat cost more, and house rent was higher, so that the advance of wages was not altogether a gain. But in other articles, such as bread—upon which their friends the Tories did their best to keep a tax—sugar, coffee, and clothing, there was a great reduction in price. Taking all these circumstances into account, he thought they might say that the industrial classes of this country had had their incomes considerably increased; and, while some commodities had increased in value, the price of other articles had been reduced. Summing all these things up, every dispassionate and fair man must admit that the material and domestic comforts of the working men had improved during the last twenty-five years. (Applause.) There were also other encouraging facts to be taken into consideration. Under the administration of the Liberal Government, great attention had been paid to social questions. The hours of labour for women and children in factories had been reduced, and it had been made a penal offence to employ women in pits. (Applause.) Various measures had been adopted to improve the moral and material condition of women and children; and while he had no wish to allow of too much governmental interference, it was necessary in our complex system of society that the State should interfere for the protection of women and

children, who in law were considered as unable to protect themselves. Amongst other Acts for the social and moral improvement of the people were those relating to baths and wash-houses and those for improving the sanitary condition of the nation. The health of the nation had been unquestionably benefited by all these efforts, and though he could not say that the average health of the people was better now than before; yet considering the occupations men followed in chemical factories, lead works, and other unwholesome employments of an injurious character, he was satisfied that owing to the attention which the Government had paid to social and sanitary arrangements, the health of the people was better than it would have been without such interference. (Applause.) There had also been a great improvement in the educational system of the country. The first sum of money voted for educational purposes was proposed by Lord Russell, a statesman now in the sere and yellow leaf; a statesman whose course of policy he (Mr. Cowen), in his humble way, had sometimes seen reason to oppose; but still a statesman who had filled a large share in the legislation of this country for fifty years past; who had a bright and very honourable career to point to—(loud applause)—and who, when the history of the period came to be written, would hold as distinguished a place as any man he knew. (Renewed applause.) Any one who wished to know what Toryism was would have his wish fulfilled by referring to the debates that took place on Lord Russell making his first proposition for a grant for the education of the people. The Tories were in a state of utter bewilderment, of great horror, and of utter bamboozlement—(great laughter)—at such a suggestion being made by a Liberal statesman. He remembered that Sir Robert Inglis, who then represented the University of Oxford, said it was utterly monstrous. (Laughter.) How could they expect the people to work if they were educated? “The best thing,” Sir Robert Inglis said, “is to keep the people ignorant, and they will serve us efficiently and well; but educate them, and make them wise, and they will be discontented, they will be our masters.” Lord Russell, however, succeeded in getting a grant. In 1840, some thirty-three years ago, it amounted to £140,000 or £150,000, and the amount had gone on steadily increasing, so that at the present time the sum allowed for educational purposes amounted to five millions. (Loud applause.) He thought this was a wise expenditure of the public money. They could not do better than in educating the people and making them wiser, for in doing so they

made them more powerful, and in making them more powerful they added not only to their capacity, and benefited themselves and their families, but benefited the nation, and added to the national strength. (Applause.) But the medal had a reverse. There were two sides to the question. With all this increased trade, and prosperity, and comfort there was a large amount of chronic pauperism in the country. The number of paupers permanently receiving relief was something like 1,200,000 in England and Wales; while, if they took also those who required occasional relief, and people just a little above the position of paupers, there were in England and Wales something like four millions, or nearly one-fifth of the whole population, depending more or less on public support. This was a humiliating fact, and the recollection of it ought to be an incentive to them in their endeavour to improve their position. When they came to deal with the question of the social condition of the people, this question of pauperism must come to the front—a great force and power. This disposition of a section of the poor to rely on the State ought to be discouraged as much as possible. They should try to make the people industrious, and put within their reach the power, the faculty, and the capacity of maintaining themselves. (Applause.) A crust and a miserable hovel in which to live were infinitely preferable to living in a better house, surrounded with more comforts, if given by another. He wished to urge on the people that one of the best conditions of comfort and success in life was to make themselves independent, and having done that the rest was tolerably easy. Having discussed this question somewhat further, and shown that while the population had increased 35 per cent., the poor's and police rates had increased 67 per cent., Mr. Cowen went on to observe that, in view of these circumstances, there was one question which required consideration. He was then speaking in a licensed victualler's house, but he spoke with perfect frankness and sincerity when he said that, in his opinion, one of the strongest reasons of our pauperism was the besetting sin of many of our fellow-countrymen. (Applause.) He had no doubt whatever that that had very largely to do with the pauperism to which he had referred, and he hoped in future they would see an improvement in that respect. (More applause.) It was one of the points—not, probably, of the general Liberal creed—but of his creed, that people ought to have the dispensing of the licenses in their own hands. (Hear, hear.) [A Voice : Are you aware that is against yourself ?] He was in-

formed that this was against him ; but he was not conscious of it, or if he was, he was indifferent to it. (Applause.) As it was his conviction, however, he uttered it frankly and fairly. If they agreed with him, well and good ; but he should never desire any man to vote for him under a misapprehension. [A Voice : Don't rob a poor man of his beer, and great laughter.] He would rob no man of his beer. Every man had a right to drink as he thought proper. (Applause.) If he chose to spend his money in intoxicating drink that was his own business, and he would never attempt to interfere with him. (More applause.) He utterly repudiated the doctrine of attempting to make men sober by Act of Parliament. They did not make them religious by Act of Parliament—they gave them instruction ; but what he did say was this, that in the face of a large and increasing pauperism, in the face of this serious social evil, it was only right that the people themselves should have the management of the licensing. He did not put it to them as one who believed in a certain social opinion. He did not put it as a believer in drink, nor as a non-believer in drink, but as a broad Liberal principle, that the people should have the control of their own affairs. It was an essential element in the future welfare of the State that the masses of our fellow-countrymen should have a chance of saying how and when and to what extent they should have the management in settling those questions. (Applause.) He was satisfied that every man, whatever his other opinions, must admit the full force of the conclusion that those who purchased the commodity should be able to say how it should be sold. While such questions as those remained to be dealt with he could not agree with their Tory friends that there was nothing more to do. (Laughter.) Instead of that being the case, what had been already accomplished ought to be a stimulus to greater exertion. (Applause.) He had no disposition to join with the Tories in the cry of their party to let things alone. It was impossible to be still, and indeed it would be one of the worst possible things for the country if they could be, for stagnation was practical death. A stagnant sheet of water might look bright and smooth and beautiful, but when they stirred up the surface it would be found to be offensive and to contain within it the seeds of destruction and death ; whereas a stream running over rugged ground, noisy in its progress, might contribute to health, prosperity, and life. And it was the same with society. A stagnant state of society was a state of material and mental death ; a progressive

state of society was one of activity and vigour. (Applause.) And for his part he sympathised with the progressive state. If they adopted the stagnation doctrine the sun of our glory would set, and the prospects of our nation would be written in water. (Loud applause.)

In reply to a question asked with reference to the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Master and Servants Act,

Mr. COWEN said that he had answered the question at the other meetings, and he would again answer it with pleasure. He had taken some little part in the attempt to amend these laws—the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Master and Servants Act, and the Conspiracy Act—and he thoroughly agreed with the movement made by Mr. Mundella and others to amend them in the sense their friend had indicated. He thought that it was an outrageous shame that working men should be punished criminally while the employer was only punished civilly. He had no conceivable sympathy with that course of procedure, and if he were returned to Parliament he would support Mr. Mundella or Mr. Eustace Smith, the member of Parliament for Tynemouth, who was interested in the bill as well, or indeed any member of Parliament who should propose a bill with a view to alter the three Acts to which reference had been made. He believed, however, that it would not be necessary for any independent member to take action, for, as he explained the other night, the matter had been relegated to the Government itself. Mr. Lowe had given a pledge so far as concerned the Criminal Law Amendment Act. He saw Mr. George Howell not long ago, and Mr. A. McDonald who had called upon Mr. Lowe, and the latter gave them his personal assurance that a bill should be prepared to meet their views so as to alter the law in accordance therewith. Both the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, Sir Henry James and Sir V. Harcourt, had also pledged themselves that during this next session they would introduce a bill to meet the views of working men and their friends with respect to the Conspiracy and Master and Servants Acts, so that they might consider that the Government had taken up these matters themselves. He might say, however, that they would not get any support from their Tory opponents. The working men never would get any support from them. They had complained of the slow progress of their Whig friends, but, at any rate, their face was invariably set in the right direction; and with Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright at the head of affairs, working men might with reason expect to receive both justice and sympathy. (Applause.)

Replying to a question as to whether he would endeavour to overthrow the monarchy and the throne,

Mr. COWEN said that he had not the most remote intention of attempting such a herculean task—(laughter)—and that if he were to attempt it he was afraid that he would deserve to be taken to Bedlam, where lunatics were confined. (Loud applause). Queen Victoria was entitled to their respect. (Applause). He explained at Elswick the other night his views upon the subject—(“Yes you did”)—but he had no objection to again repeat them if necessary. He would say this, that the question of Republicanism was not a political question at all. It was merely a question of political speculation, and they might as well ask his opinion upon the doctrine of Evolution that had lately been propounded by Mr. Herbert Spencer and others, or indeed upon any abstract subject of that kind. There was no probability that the question of Republicanism would come to be a practical question in this country; certainly not in this generation, nor in the next. He hoped that it might never come, so far as he was concerned, as long as they had the same mild rule under which they now lived. (Loud applause). Republicanism was quite a different thing in France. There it was a practical question. There the contest was between Republicanism and Monarchy. The question of Republicanism was a practical question in Spain. There it was a fight as between Castelar and Serrano, and others who represented the Monarchy. But in England they were perfectly well satisfied with the rule of the Sovereign. Apart from political consideration there were two or three points that entitled the Queen to their respect and consideration, quite apart from the fact that she was a monarch, altogether apart from the fact that she was a strictly Constitutional Monarch, she had shown her wide sympathies with the masses of the people. (Loud cheers). He recollected that, when the poor rope walker at Birmingham fell and killed himself, the Queen expressed her disapproval of the brutal exhibition. He recollected also, that when poor Abraham Lincoln died—the representative of American Republicanism—the Queen was the first to send a sympathetic letter to his widow. He also remembered that, when some scores of Northumberland pitmen were buried in the bowels of the earth the Queen sent her sympathy and support. (Loud applause). He knew indeed of no monarch in Europe whose throne was more settled in the affections of the people of the country. (Loud applause).

SPEECH V.

[*Lecture Room, Saturday, January 3rd, 1874.*]

MR. HAMOND AND THE CONSERVATIVES—TORY ABUSE—DEFINITE
POLITICAL OPINION—THREE POLITICAL PRINCIPLES—RELIGIOUS
EQUALITY—THE PRINCIPLE OF GOOD GOVERNMENT—REVERENCE
FOR PUBLIC OPINION—THE ASHANTEE WAR AND ARBITRATION—
THE DIRECT REPRESENTATION OF LABOUR—UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE
—THE REPUBLICAN CLUB—HOME RULE.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I rejoice with you that the issue before the electors of Newcastle is so simple and so clear. We have not had so definite a political issue raised in this town for the last six-and-twenty years. In 1847, at the general election which took place after the repeal of the corn laws, the Tories made an unsuccessful attempt to return a member for this borough. Mr. Richard Hodgson fought Mr. Headlam for the seat vacated by his brother, and Mr. Headlam beat Mr. Hodgson by upwards of 300 votes. I think that defeat to some extent disorganised the forces of the Tory party in Newcastle, for they made no renewed effort to secure the election of a man of their political opinions for twelve years. (Loud applause.) When Mr. Headlam was made a member of Lord Palmerston's Government in 1859, another attempt was made to secure a Tory member for this town; but Mr. Cuthbert, who was the Tory champion on that occasion, was beaten even by a more decisive majority than Mr. Hodgson had been before him, Mr. Headlam being elected by a majority of upwards of 1,000 votes. (Loud applause.) No further struggle has been made, until this year, to contest the constituency on purely Tory principles.

MR. HAMOND AND THE CONSERVATIVES.

Mr. Hamond was a candidate at the general election in 1868, but, instead of then appearing as an outspoken Tory, he was what was called an "independent candidate." (Laughter and applause.) This is a somewhat doubtful description, as it very frequently happens that a man who boasts of his independence of either party, becomes in practice, when he enters the House of Commons, the most "dependent" man there. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Hamond, however, fought the battle on that ground, and received a certain measure of support from questionable Liberals—(A Voice: "Money too," and great laughter)—but the Tories, as a party, did not support his candidature. A section of them did, but the body of them did not. The result of this course of action was that after the election, and when Mr. Hamond was defeated, the Tory spokesmen repudiated Mr. Hamond's candidature, declaring that they did not at all feel disheartened in consequence of his want of success. (Laughter and applause.) They will not be able to make such a statement after the election that is going to take place now. Mr. Hamond is their chosen champion, although at first they had some hesitation about accepting him. The Conservative Association would have preferred Mr. Gainsford Bruce as their candidate, but Mr. Bruce had to withdraw before the superior claims of Mr. Hamond; and now, as the chairman has said, that gentleman is the recognized Tory candidate for Newcastle. If Mr. Hamond succeeds, the Tories will be fairly able to say that the majority of the inhabitants of this town sympathise with Tory views, and Tory principles. ("No, no," and Yes.") They will be able, I say, if a majority of the constituency returns my opponent to make such a declaration; but if, on the other hand, Mr. Hamond should be defeated, and I am successful, we, at least, may claim authority to say that the majority of the electors are Liberal. (Loud applause.) The issue, therefore, is a fair, clear, distinct, and unmistakable one, and I hope we shall fight the battle out on that line. (Hear, hear, and applause.) We have been practically engaged in this contest for a couple of weeks.

TORY ABUSE.

I believe it is a fortnight to-day since Mr. Hamond made it known to his friends and supporters that he meant to be a candidate for the vacant seat. During that time I have not seen any authoritative or dispassionate statement of the principles on which he seeks to secure your support. We have, however, had a large measure of abuse. (Loud applause.) They have abused

the individual who is now addressing you in good set terms ; and they have strenuously attempted to give currency to some very feeble and somewhat foolish jokes. But so far as argument is concerned, so far as reasonable and intelligent defence of their principles is concerned, I have seen none from our opponents. (Hear, hear.) As far as the festivities of the season would permit, and as opportunity would allow, I have gone from one portion of the borough to another stating fully, frankly, and explicitly my opinions. I have been glad to answer questions that have been put to me in elucidation or in explanation of my views ; but our friends have not followed that course of action. It strikes me, Mr. Chairman, that they are acting on an old but somewhat stale practice. When a man is pleading a bad cause, he contents himself with abusing the plaintiff's attorney. (Laughter and applause.) Our friends have a bad cause. They cannot support it with argument and with reason ; and hence they imagine that they will be able to advance it by abusing me and misrepresenting my principles. They hope that, if they throw dirt plentifully, and in large pail-fuls, some of it will stick. (Laughter.) Well, possibly it may ; but I think when the weather dries the dirt will slide off. (Renewed laughter and applause.) Mr. Daniel O'Connell once said, " If you allow a lie to get half a mile the start of you, it will run round the world, and you will never be able to catch it." (Laughter.) There is a certain amount of truth in the statement. But Newcastle is scarcely the world, and it is probable that we may fasten some of these lies before they get the circuit of this borough. (Hear, hear, and great applause.) I am satisfied that the Tory course of proceeding, however, it may please the fancy, and tickle the imagination of our opponents for the time, can never be permanently satisfactory. The English people sometimes deal hardly with a public man, and they occasionally judge him harshly ; but it is only for a time. In the long run, gentlemen, public opinion is tolerably just to all of us. It sums up our qualities and disqualifications, our virtues and vices, with tolerable fairness. I at least am willing to allow my character or my career as a politician to stand the test of time. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) I am satisfied of this, that fair statement, candid argument, and reasonable consideration for the opinions and the convictions of our opponents, will, in the long run, be approved by the rational and intelligent section of the community. (Applause.) I have relied on that in this contest, and I have not said, and I do not intend to say—and, so far as I know, none of

the gentlemen with whom I am associated have ever said—one unkind or unfriendly word of our opponents. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) We have spoken frankly and plainly against their principles, but have never indulged in mere personal abuse. I hope we shall continue to follow this course, feeling assured that, whatever may be the issue at the poll, the judgment and intelligence of the thinking men of all parties will be on our side. (Loud applause.)

DEFINITE POLITICAL OPINION.

The few friends that have taken objection to my candidature seem to feel the strongest opposition to it because I have decided political opinions. It is true I have distinct and emphatic political convictions. (Laughter and applause.) That seems to be the strongest objection that I have heard urged by men that are opposed to the position I at your desire now occupy. Gentlemen, I do not think that is a reasonable or sound ground of objection; because all the reforms that have ever been achieved, either in the material or mental, the moral or political world, have been achieved by men who have had strong convictions, and who have earnestly felt and conscientiously and persistently endeavoured to give effect to them. (Loud cheers.) All the great achievements that the world boasts of have been won in the way I have described. If you wish to accomplish any specific purpose you must get an individual qualified for the work. (Hear, hear.) If I want an engine built, I must get an engineer. If I want a house built, I must have a mason or a builder. It would be unwise to take a sailor, for example, to construct a machine, or to take a printer to erect a dwelling. The printer is right in his vocation, as the sailor is in his; but, to jumble their offices, would be not to accomplish the object in view, and to cause confusion. (Hear, hear.) It is the same in political as in material matters. If you wish a man to go to Parliament to represent the political opinions of the community, you must have a man who has given politics some measure of study—a man who has, to some extent at least, familiarised himself with public affairs, and is likely to be acquainted with the leading principles and details of questions submitted to the legislature for consideration. (Applause.) A man may be an able man of the world, and yet not be qualified to discharge these duties. (Hear, hear.) These are the duties that you look for at the hands of a parliamentary representative. He should be able to discuss intelligibly the questions that are sub-

mitted to the legislature. (Cheers.) He may have qualifications fitting him for other positions and yet not be suited to this. In the House of Commons it is a man's knowledge of political questions, his capacity to grapple with the subjects that come under his consideration, which ought to be his qualifications for the post. (Hear, hear, and renewed cheers.) I have no objection to my friend Mr. Hamond in various capacities. He is a member of our Town Council; he has taken an active interest in municipal matters, and in that body I have frequently agreed with him, and probably, as frequently disagreed. (Laughter.) I have to say to him that he speaks there a little too often. (Hear, hear.) Perhaps he says at times needlessly sharp things, and the personal character of some of his utterances scarcely contributes to the amenity of debate. (Renewed laughter.) But nevertheless Mr Hamond, in municipal matters, is possessed of a certain measure of information, and I will say honestly that in the Council "we could better spare a better man." (Hear, hear, and applause.) Mr. Hamond is also a member of the judicial bench, and I dare say an efficient, assiduous, and useful magistrate, as far as I know. I have had no knowledge of his capacity in that vocation—(a laugh)—as I have not yet appeared before our magistrates either for a breach of the law or otherwise; but while I admit to the full Mr Hamond's knowledge of municipal affairs, and, possibly his knowledge of judicial matters, I have yet to learn that, for these 20 years, during which time I have known him, he has never given any very earnest attention to political operations. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, we have met in this room many times, and have, during that period, discussed public questions of great national interest—questions engaging the consideration of this country and the world. We have talked on all manner of subjects—social and political, questions affecting foreign states, and questions affecting our own country—but I have never known Mr. Hamond take any very warm or active interest in the debates. (Loud applause.) I have no wish to disparage his capacity, no wish to weaken the power he is supposed to possess, intellectual or otherwise. I have no wish to censure him in this respect; but as far as I am aware, Mr. Hamond has not, during the twenty years he has been before the public of Newcastle, given any proof of his political knowledge or his legislative capacity. (Loud applause.) Possibly, gentlemen, it may be that I have not seen all the faculty that he does possess. Possibly he may have hidden it under a bushel, and we may have yet to see it in public. (Laughter.) If a man is to be

the representative of any constituency in Parliament the qualifications for that office must not be the mere possession of wealth or the fact of activity in other walks of life. It must be the man's knowledge of the questions likely to come before the Legislature, and his practical familiarity with national affairs. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

THREE POLITICAL PRINCIPLES.

Mr. Chairman, there are three principles which lie at the foot of any political professions that ever I have made. The first principle that has guided me through life, in any course of advocacy I have pursued, is this—that all men, whatever their walk or grade in life may be, ought to be equal before the law. (Great applause). There are social distinctions in the State which, I fear, we shall not be able to alter by all our wise legislation. A very great authority has told us that we shall have the poor always with us, and, unquestionably, so long as there are thrifty men and intemperate men, so long as there are sober men and thoughtless men, as long as these varied qualities exist amongst the people—and they will always exist—so there will be men who are more or less well-to-do in the State, and others who will be more or less impoverished. (Hear, hear). There will be these social distinctions as long as society exists on its present basis. We can never expect to see perfect equality of social conditions and circumstances. We may as well expect to see all men of the same height, the same obesity, all men having one complexion, or all having the same intellectual powers. (Hear, hear). We cannot expect that, nor desire it. Society would be a very dismal thing if we were all reduced to a dead level. That very variety of human life is to me its charm. The very differences among my countrymen are to me an attraction. (Hear, hear). We cannot, I say, expect to see social uniformity; but although there is not social uniformity, there ought to be legal equality. (Cheers). I mean to say that whether a man is a plebian or patrician, whether a member of the aristocracy or a hard working artisan who lives in a hovel or a cottage, whatever his material condition, so far as the law of the land is concerned all men ought to be on an equality. (Loud applause). That principle lies at the root of all political liberty. It has been the animating thought of all the advocates of freedom since England was a nation. It was the guiding principle that influenced Hereward and the patriotic Saxons in their contests with the Normans; it was that principle that animated the

barons who wrung the charter of our liberties from King John at Runnymede ; it is that principle which is inscribed in our Bill of Rights ; it is that principle for which Hampden fought, Milton sang, and Sidney and Russell died. (Loud applause.) It is that principle for which patriots in this country have uniformly fought from the days of King Alfred to the days of John Bright. (Loud cheers.) That is, I say, the cardinal root-thought of Liberal principles—the right of every man to equality before the law. (Renewed applause.) We have nearly got it in this country, I admit. There are little inequalities, yet, but, substantially, we may say we have obtained that much in England. (Hear, hear.) There was a time when the working classes in this land were in a state not only of practical, but of legal, slavery. That is past. The serfs have been emancipated, and our working artisans have fought their way up from the condition of partial dependence on those around them, to be free citizens in a great state, to rejoice in her glory, and to contribute to her greatness. (Great cheering.) That I say we have accomplished, and I glory in it. (Cheers.) That is my first political principle.

RELIGIOUS EQUALITY.

The next is complete religious equality. (Loud cheers.) There are differences amongst us on theological subjects, and will be as long as there are independent minds. To say that there are differences amongst earnest men on this subject is simply to say that they have thought. (Hear, hear.) Men who have not thought may have an uniform faith, but men who have studied these vast questions must differ upon them. There was a time, gentlemen, when the inhabitants of this island were Pagans. When Christianity was introduced and brought with it its countless blessings, brought with it political freedom, and the hope of better things here and hereafter—when, I say, that came, the king and rulers, and, with the king and rulers, the Government of the State, and the entire inhabitants of the country embraced the Christian faith. For years, indeed for centuries, the English people held the same essential principles of Christian doctrine. But as light developed, as information extended, as man's knowledge became more diversified, and man's experience became wider, then, in course of time, differences arose, and diversities of views took place. The principles of Christianity, as it was first introduced, were still steadily held by the people ; but the views which different men took of them varied according to their train-

ing and experience. (Hear, hear.) Any dozen men, looking at a picture on a wall, will see it in different lights. Some will see it in one shade, some in another. So it is with certain religious truths. There is the grand cardinal principle which the English people, as a nation, accept; but the different shades of opinion amongst them are very diversified. It is, however, quite possible for men to hold the cardinal principles in common, and yet to respect these differences. (Hear, hear, and applause.) But the only condition on which that can be done is that each man should honour the sincere convictions of his neighbour. Man is responsible to a higher power than his fellows, to a greater authority than any government—(Renewed applause)—and his fellow-beings have no right to interfere between him and his Maker. (Cheers.) I hold, then, that while recognising these great cardinal principles, it is fair that we should have perfect religious equality between sects. The State ought not to bring its power, and prestige, and the other privileges that belong to it, and use them in favour of any one religious body. (Great cheers.) We have been steadily and persistently working up to that conception of religious equality. (Hear, hear.) Church rates have gone, Easter dues have gone, the Irish Established Church has disappeared. (Immense cheering.) And, I believe, in all the ramifications of society there is a disposition on the part of all men—on the part of members of the Established Church, the members of the Catholic body, and other denominations—there is a disposition to deal more kindly, respectfully, and tenderly with the feelings of those who differ from them than once existed. (Loud applause.) One of the most marked and encouraging characteristics of the present time is the improved tone amongst us on this subject; but still we have in this country a Church protected and supported by law! (Hear, hear.) I do not think the majority of Englishmen are in favour of altering that arrangement. (Hear, hear, “Yes,” and applause.) For my part I am in favour of it—(loud applause)—and on all fitting occasions, and with all the force I can command, temperately, candidly, fairly I hope, I shall put my views before my countrymen. (Cheers.) But, at the same time, I must acquiesce in the fact that the majority of Englishmen at the present moment seem to wish to retain that ecclesiastical arrangement as it now exists. Still, apart from the fact that so many persons wish to retain the Establishment, the second great principle of a Liberal’s creed is that there should be religious equality. (Applause.) The first con-

dition, then, is complete political freedom, and the second is religious equality.

THE PRINCIPLE OF GOOD GOVERNMENT.

The third principle is that the Government of the country should be conducted so as to confer the greatest good upon the greatest number. By that, I mean that in all the ramifications of our governmental machinery there ought to be a regard for the interests of the majority of the inhabitants of the State, and not for any mere section of them. (Hear, hear.) It is impossible to make a change in any of our laws, to make an alteration in any of our municipal or imperial arrangements, without to some extent disturbing existing privileges. In making that disturbance a certain amount of vested interests must be disturbed. (Hear, hear.) When railways came into use the old stage coach was displaced; and when we get aerial navigation we shall disturb the railways. (Loud applause.) Wherever there is a change taking place there is necessarily a certain measure of social and legal disturbance, and a given number of people will suffer in consequence. (Applause.) I hold, gentlemen, that in dealing with the government of the country no reference to the interests of individuals, or classes, or sections of the State, ought to weigh against the interest of the entire community. That ought to be paramount. (Applause.) I hold by the good old doctrine laid down by Jeremy Bentham years ago, that the affairs of the State ought to be so managed as to confer the greatest good on the greatest number. (Applause.) These, gentlemen, are the three cardinal principles that have always guided my political action—entire political freedom, complete religious equality, and the greatest good of the greatest number. (Applause.) Our opponents, the Tories, do not look at the question from this point of view. They are only to a very limited extent in favour of the complete political freedom we wish to see established. They give a certain section of the community living in municipal and Parliamentary boroughs a certain authority and strength; but the people outside of those boroughs are denied that power. I do not think that this is making the inhabitants of the counties fully equal before the law. (Cheers.) There is no difference in their condition; there ought to be no difference in their privileges. (Applause.) For my part, I hold that every man, wherever he lives, if he discharges the duties of citizenship, ought to participate in the privileges of citizenship. If he contribute to the national exchequer; he ought to have some control

over its expenditure. These principles have not been acted upon, and are not acted upon by our Tory opponents. (Hear, hear.) To the second point, that of religious freedom, the Tories are equally opposed. They have always been in favour of maintaining religious privilege and exclusiveness; they have always been in favour of insisting upon the maintenance of an exclusive ecclesiastical organization. (Applause.) That is their doctrine. They believe the Church with which they are connected is the embodiment of the highest principles of Christianity, and they are wishful to have the power of the State to teach and enforce compliance with its doctrines. On that ground I differ from them. In other points they have been equally opposed to our views. They have striven, not occasionally but repeatedly—indeed, it was the animating principle of their political action in years past—so to manage the affairs of the State, so to administer the law of this nation, as to make them serve the interest of exclusive classes, without considering at all the great masses of the people. (Applause). These three principles which I have enunciated lie at the root of the political faith I have endeavoured to enforce in this district for the last twenty years; and if it should be your wish that I should go to Parliament, I shall endeavour, whenever opportunity offers in the House of Commons, still to uphold them with that share of ability of which I am possessed. (Applause.)

DEFERENCE TO PUBLIC OPINION.

But, at the same time, gentlemen, allow me to say that while I shall stand resolutely by the principles in which I believe, as a reasonable man, and as a fair and dispassionate citizen, I shall neither be so egotistical nor so dogmatic as to insist on a full and unqualified compliance with all the details of the views I hold. If I go to Parliament all I can do is to preach the principles I am now propounding; to stand up resolutely in their defence; but when it comes to a question of practical legislation, I must be, and whoever you send must be, amenable to the wishes and desires of the majority. (Applause.) As I said before, I hope that in doing so I shall neither be dogmatic nor unreasonable. Indeed, when you come to a question of practical politics, all you can ask is for a recognition of principle—the details are a matter of arrangement. The question of compromise is one in which all parties are concerned. While we emphatically differ from our Tory opponents it is only right to recognise that they are men like ourselves, Englishmen, and that they are as fully entitled to express and maintain their opinions as we are. (Applause). I

wish it, therefore, to be distinctly understood that while I will not budge one iota from my political principles, as a practical legislator I should have the greatest possible regard for the opinions of my opponents in the adjustment of all details. I would give full weight to any opinions in opposition to my own that they might express. (Applause.) Mr. Gladstone's Government, I think, represents, as nearly as it is possible for a political party to represent, the views I have just enunciated. That party is the nearest approximation to the views I have expressed that I know of in this country. The members of it, perhaps, do not go so far as I should like to see them go in many of these questions; yet still, substantially they uphold the same principles, and I shall give them, if sent to Parliament, a cheerful, cordial, but independent support. (Loud applause.) I have been informed that in this meeting to-night I am to be cross-questioned and criticised. (Laughter and applause.) I have had several intimations sent to me that there are numerous gentlemen who are anxious to pry into my mind, to ascertain my views on all questions upon which they may consider I have not been sufficiently explicit before. I am willing to stand in the pillory, and to allow them to pelt me with as many questions pertinent to the subject before us as they may think proper. (Loud cheers.) I have had one or two questions already sent to me, and so with this brief exposition of the cardinal principles of my political creed I will allow the more formal part of the speechmaking to rest. I will now pay attention to the questions that have been sent me, and will most gladly answer all others that may be asked of me afterwards. (Cheers.) I have spoken three or four times during this week, and I have given as explicit a statement of my views on the various departments of politics as I could; and now, as my friends are anxious, we will commence a political debating club. (Laughter and cheers.)

THE ASHANTEE WAR AND ARBITRATION.

One of the questions that my friends have sent me is—"What are your views on the Ashantee war—(laughter and applause)—and will you vote for Mr. Henry Richards' motion for the settling of international disputes by arbitration?" First, then, with respect to the Ashantee war, I have to say that I think we have got into a most unfortunate collision on the west coast of Africa. I quite agree with Mr. Bright, that we should get out of it as soon as possible. (Laughter and applause.) I am satisfied that however

anxious we may be to spread commerce and to propagate Christianity, we cannot do it at the mouth of the cannon, or at the point of the bayonet. (Loud applause). I have the very greatest respect for Sir Garnet Wolseley, I believe him to be a brave and able soldier, and I do not know probably that we have an abler general in the British army. He is as humane, too, as he is brave. (Applause). Nevertheless, gentlemen, I prefer the labours of David Livingstone to those of Sir Garnet Wolseley. (Cheers). The circumstances probably have been such that we have been compelled to engage in this war. When a nation has a large number of its citizens scattered over the face of the earth, and when these citizens are surrounded by hostile and savage tribes, it is not only needful, but necessary to make these fighting neighbours understand that there is a certain power behind Englishmen that will protect them if their rights or their lives are interfered with. (Applause). I suppose that is absolutely necessary, situated as we are; but I will say that the sooner our forces are withdrawn from that very insalubrious climate in Africa the better. I imagine that if we were to give our time and attention to the pacific propagation of commerce, it is possible that we might be even more successful in the future than we have been in the past. (Cheers). With respect to Mr. Richard's motion, I will cheerfully and unhesitatingly vote for it. I will repeat here what I said at another meeting:—I think the manner in which they settled the Alabama claims is one of the brightest pages in the history of Mr. Gladstone's Government. (Cheers.) That dispute was a very angry one, and it was likely to involve us in a war with our brethren across the Atlantic. We owe much to Mr. Gladstone's Government, and to Lord Granville more especially, for the diplomatic skill, the temper, the intelligence, and good feeling by which they got that treaty out of the very ravelled condition into which it was at once driven. (Cheers.) I for one believe that it would be well for the world if we were to abandon fighting. (Applause.) We cannot expect it all to come at once; it will be gradual; but I hope the influence of England will always be exercised in favour of peace. Hear, hear.) Depend upon it, gentlemen, it is not the warrior, but the teacher, that leads the vanguard of progress. It is not the man who sets squadrons in the field, or heads the charge, or leads the seige, but it is the man who can and will instruct and enlighten his fellows, so that some few of them, at least, shall be left purer and better for his living amongst them. (Applause.) The time will come, gentlemen, when the better future which we

talk of will be realised. I think there is greater credit to be won by a man whose victories redden no rivers and whiten no plains, but who plants his victorious banner on the realms of intellect he has conquered, and peopled with joy and everlasting felicity, than by the man who builds his empire on the wretched and mangled remains of dismembered nations. (Loud cheers).

THE DIRECT REPRESENTATION OF LABOUR.

I am asked again if I am in favour of the representation of labour in the House of Commons. (Laughter, and a voice, "Everybody knows that.") Well, I am not in favour of the representation of indolence or ignorance. (Laughter.) I think I understand the meaning of the friend who has put this question. The question is, I take it, whether I am in favour of working men as working men sending representatives to Parliament. I will be perfectly frank in my statement on this subject. I think that the representatives we send to Parliament should not represent classes, (Hear, hear.) They should not be men that represent the middle classes, nor the working men, nor the aristocracy, nor any other specified class. (Hear, hear, and applause.) They should be Englishmen, they should be citizens, they should be men fitted by character and capacity to discharge the duties of legislators, and the fact that they accidentally belong to any one sect, or party, or class in the State, ought neither to be a qualification nor a disqualification. (Applause.) I am sorry that, as matters now stand, the only body of men that are not represented in Parliament are the artisan class; but if the working men want that changed, they know how to do it. (Applause.) You have the power, gentlemen; you can soon settle the business for yourselves. (Hear, hear, and applause.) The miners of Morpeth have settled it. (Loud applause.) And my good friend, Mr. Burt, will at the next election go to Parliament as the representative of that constituency. (Applause.) But Mr. Burt does not go as a working man, as a simple miner; he goes as an intelligent Englishman, taking his place on the floor of the House of Commons as an equal of any man there. (Cheers.) I have known Mr. Burt intimately for years, and I say, speaking with a full knowledge of his character and attainments, that there is no man in the House of Commons who will bring to the discharge of his duties greater intelligence, better moral character, and a more resolute determination to do his duty. (Applause.) I repeat, then, that so far as sectional or class representation is concerned, I have no sympathy

with that view. (Hear, hear.) I hear of some representatives of working men down in the South of England telling their fellow-workmen that they should send representatives of labour, and that it did not matter whether they were Tories, Whigs, or Radicals—they should be *simply* representatives of labour. Gentlemen, I have not the slightest sympathy with such doctrines. I have no faith in such a policy. It is just a repetition of that very class legislation that you and I, and every consistent Radical, have all along been protesting against. (Applause.) I repeat, then, to my friend that I hold that the fact of whether the man is a working man, whether he is a tradesman, or whether he is a manufacturer, ought never to be taken into account, but that his intellectual capacity, his knowledge of public affairs, and his moral character only should be his qualifications. (Applause.)

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

Another question is—"Do you consider Universal Suffrage a theoretical or practical question? Would you, or would you not, vote for its adoption? If proposed next session, would you support a bill to render canvassing illegal?" Gentlemen, with respect to Universal Suffrage, I have to say this:—the principle of Universal Suffrage I have always believed in. (Applause.) I believe the right of every man to the suffrage is a natural right, that no Government ever gave it to him, and that no Government can take it from him. (Cheers.) That is my conviction, and I have always maintained it. But, speaking of it as a practical question at this time, I must, as a matter of fairness, say I believe that the household suffrage we now possess in this town, and which gives every man a vote who lives in a house rated to the poor, practically enfranchises nearly every citizen. It may not enfranchise them all, but it nearly does so. If, however, we had a reasonable lodger franchise—one not so hampered by restrictions and conditions—I believe that then we would have practically universal suffrage. Our friend asked me if I would support it should it come up in Parliament next Session. If it does, I certainly shall. (Applause.) I do not think, however, that there is the slightest chance or possibility of anyone proposing universal suffrage in the coming Parliament; indeed I believe it will require all the power the Liberals possess to get the borough franchise extended to the counties. If we do that we have gained our objects step by step. First we got £10 household suffrage, then the household franchise in boroughs, and

we shall ultimately get the household franchise in counties. (Applause.) And having got this last, if our friends are anxious to base the suffrage on man instead of property, and if there is a strong feeling throughout the country in favour of such a doctrine—I for one believe in its justness, and am thoroughly convinced of its fairness—I will, should I be returned, most cheerfully and heartily support it. Then I am asked, “Will you support a bill rendering canvassing illegal?” Most unquestionably, yes. (Applause.) I never knew a man engaged in a contested election on the Radical side who was not of the same opinion. (Hear, hear.) I do not know how we could prevent one man asking another for his vote; it would be difficult to define what canvassing is, but still I would make it a penal offence for any man formally to employ another man to solicit votes on his behalf. That is the complexion it would come to sooner or later. But I will go further, gentlemen. I should, if sent to Parliament, vote that the full amount of the electoral expenses attending the taking of the ballot should be thrown upon the ratepayers. I do not speak of it as a personal matter,—so far as I myself am concerned, the fact of paying a few hundred pounds for this election will never deprive me of a single cup of tea—(laughter)—and the money that might be spent in that way, I suppose, would have to be spent some other way—(renewed laughter)—however, that is a matter of no moment; but this I say—the inhabitants of a town who send a man to represent them should at least provide the machinery to elect him. You do that in municipal contests, and school board contests, and I think it ought to be done in Parliamentary elections. (Applause.) The next question is—“Are you satisfied with the insulting language used against the Jews in your paper some months ago?” (Loud laughter.) I do not know what our friend exactly means, but if anybody here has been proprietor of a newspaper they will know that it is a human, a mental, and, I may almost say, a physical impossibility for one man to be responsible for everything it contains. I should suppose that anyone who has to do with periodical publications will know that to a very large extent the proprietor of a newspaper has to be responsible for the people that are engaged upon it, and that it very often happens that a man out of no ill feeling or ill temper, but from accidental circumstances or other reasons, may give expression to opinions that the party who is peculiarly and legally responsible has no control over whatever. This I can say as an individual—I never penned a line, I never said a word hostile or derogatory to my Jewish fellow country-men in my life. (Ap-

plause.) I have maintained the rights of the Jews as resolutely and determinedly as any one; I have striven to secure their political emancipation when our Tory opponents were anxious to rivet the last fetter of religious exclusiveness and oppression upon this small and not very powerful body. So far as I was concerned, and so far as the party with whom I am politically associated are concerned, we used all possible efforts to secure their emancipation. I suppose the gentleman who writes me this letter has seen in the newspaper with which I am connected some sharp criticism upon the members of the Jewish persuasion. I repeat that if there has been I do not approve of such censure. A Jew may be a bad Jew or a good Jew, a wise man or a foolish man. As an individual I have no objections to your condemning or praising him as circumstances require; but to condemn an entire nation or class, and especially and above all other things considering that this people has been more persecuted than any other branch of the human family, is a thing that I have never been guilty of and never would. (Applause.)

THE "REPUBLICAN CLUB."

A gentleman here asks the question whether I am President of the Republican Club. (Loud laughter.) Well, as a matter of fact, I am not President of the Republican Club. I repeat—to be exact on that point—I am not. Further, I have never acted in that capacity. There has been an association of political reformers; an association of men in this town who hold political views of the character indicted by that name. They called it a club; it was simply an educational institution, and was got together, as I understand, by a number of young men chiefly with the view of providing a reading room, holding discussions, and furnishing papers and books, with a view to spreading political information. My friends asked me to be the president, or rather they did not ask me—(laughter)—but they elected me to the office, and afterwards told me they had done so. (Laughter.) I never had any opportunity of going or taking part in their proceedings. These are the facts—I am not speaking as to opinions. I have not the pleasure of knowing exactly where the club is located. I never was in it. I never took part in any of its proceedings. I make this statement of facts to the gentleman who asks me if I am chairman of the club. For his satisfaction I once more repeat I am not the chairman; I have never acted in that capacity. The club that is referred to is a purely educational institution, and its

object is simply to distribute political and general information; and the notion that the society was to dethrone the Queen and upset the Constitution of this country is one so utterly ridiculous that I confess I have never failed to smile when I have heard it mentioned. (Laughter and applause.) Our opponents in this election and previously have been tolerably hard in their censure of myself and of my political course of action. There are two things they have endeavoured to impress upon the people of this town—first, that I was a fool. (Great laughter.) That is one settled conviction that they wished to convey to the inhabitants of this district, so far as they had the power to do so. Then, on the other hand, they were anxious to convey this very opposite impression—that I was some desperate hobgoblin—(great laughter)—who was going to swallow all the institutions of the State; to drive the Queen into exile; to turn the Chancellor out of the House of Lords, and, in fact, to bring some extraordinary social or political revolution on this land. (Laughter and applause.) If I am the simpleton they represent me to be on some occasions, surely I cannot be the dangerous or clever conspirator that they also describe at other times. (Laughter and applause.) Their attempt to press this description has been unfair. By the time this election gets over it will be discovered that they have been raising a very large amount of dust to no purpose, and that they have been making a very considerable amount of noise for nothing. (Great laughter.) I repeat that their statements and accusations are entirely beside the question, and the accidental fact that a few friends of mine happened to nominate me to be the chairman of an association having for its objects the dissemination of political knowledge and the furnishing of books to its members, scarcely warrant our opponents in making the rabid attack they have made upon my character. (Cheers.)

HOME RULE.

Mr. COWEN, in reply to a question as to whether he would support a bill in favour of an Irish Parliament, said: I will endeavour to make my Irish friends comprehend me on this subject if possible. I must say to the gentleman who has just addressed me that I think the body he represents has been somewhat exacting and unreasonable. A deputation of the society came to see me, and I had a short interview with them during which I stated as explicitly as I could my opinions on the two questions they put to me. They asked if I was in favour of releasing the political prisoners,

and also whether I was in favour of a bill for Home Rule. My answer in respect to the first question was that I was in favour of the immediate release of the political prisoners (cheers) ; but that so far as a bill for conferring Home Rule on the Irish people was concerned, it was impossible for me to give a distinct answer to the question, inasmuch as I had never seen such a bill. (Disapprobation.) No bill with that object has been proposed, and therefore I could not give an opinion. That was my answer to the deputation, and the gentleman who came to the meeting held on Tuesday put the same questions. [Mr. Curran : We did not.] —(Hisses and “ order.”) You will bear me out that a gentleman came and asked me the questions on this platform. (A voice : Unauthorised.) The question was asked me ; I don’t care by whom. [Cries of “ Mr. Hill.”] Well, Mr. Hill asked me the question—I am not saying whether he was authorised by the Home Rule Association or not—but he asked me the question, and I have yet to learn that the officers of the Home Rule Association are the only persons who shall question me on this subject. (Applause.) There are other persons who are as much interested in the matter as they are and who have as much right to ask my opinion on the subject. (Cheers.) I appeal to you whether I did not give a distinct answer to Mr. Hill’s question—(applause)—and I have to say this, that I will not, either on this subject or any other, be squeezed by any body of men whatever to give expression to an opinion I don’t hold ; I will not be intimidated by threats of opposition or bribed by promises of support to state what I don’t honestly think. (Loud cheers.) I am an Englishman ! I have a perfect right to hold and express my opinions. (Applause.) I will express them distinctly and emphatically. But having already done so, I must say that a certain section of the Irishmen have acted in a somewhat unfriendly manner in this matter towards me. However, I will let that pass, and say again, frankly, explicitly, and completely, that so far as the principle of Home Rule is concerned I am thoroughly with them—(cheers)—that so far as the management of Irish affairs by Irish people is concerned, I entirely concur with them. (Renewed cheers.) The principle of Home Rule, as laid down by Mr. Butt in his late speech, I entirely endorse. (Applause.) But when I say this, I also repeat that I shall not be squeezed. I will not be dictated to by any man or body of men. (Loud cheers.) If I go to Parliament, I shall go as an independent, free-born British citizen. (More applause.) I shall preach the principles I believe

to be true, and I shall enforce them in the best manner I am able. But there shall no section of the community exact from me a confession of opinion that I don't honestly hold. (Applause.) I repeat then for the satisfaction of our friends who have been fair with me with respect to this Home Rule question, that I assent to the principle with all my heart. (Applause.) I sincerely approve of the principle they are contending for, and if I go to Parliament I shall support it. But, at the same time, understand that while I support the principle, I will never support any attempt to disorganise or break up this empire. (Applause.) Let the Irish people manage their own affairs so far as the internal resources of the country are concerned, and so far as the development of their local government is concerned. Let them manage their own home transactions. Let Scotchmen do likewise; for I am satisfied it would be well for the Imperial Parliament if it was relieved of a large measure of the tedious and technical work that is now thrown upon its members. I am satisfied it would be to the advantage of this country, and also of Ireland and Scotland, if such an arrangement were carried out. (Applause.) But I am not in favour of the dismemberment of the British empire, and I don't believe the supporters of Home Rule are either. The whole tendency of political thought and action throughout the world is in favour of united nations. I spent some of the best force of my life in defending the union of the United States of America when the insurrection of the slaveholders of the South took place, and they wished to set up a Government of themselves, and master that country, with a view to serve the interests of slavery. That effort at disunion happily failed. We have seen a change take place in Italy. (Applause.) There were nine or ten different States in Italy some few years ago, but now it is a united and free country. (Applause.) We had lately in Germany 39 small States, most of which are now absorbed into one. After having waded through a sea of blood they are now one great empire. (Applause.) We have seen an attempt, or rather, we did see an attempt, two or three years ago, in France, to separate that great country, but to the lasting honour and patriotism of that intrepid deputy, Gambetta—(applause)—he said he would stake his life, all that honour and that fame ere gave, to maintain the integrity of that fair land. (Applause.) And we have also seen in Spain an effort on the part of some misled, infatuated men to dismember that grand country, and we have noted the resolute struggle of the gallant Castelar to save that nation. (Applause.) For my part, I believe that, for

better or worse, the interests of Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen are bound together. (Applause.) I believe our interests are better served by being united than they would be if the nations were dissevered. (Applause.) I know—no one knows better—how deeply sinned against our fellow-countrymen have been. I know that their course has been very often one of tribulation and sorrow. I am not unacquainted with the struggles of her patriots, nor with the labours of her gallant statesmen in past times—(applause)—and there is no man who sympathises more deeply with the spirit that animated the immortal Grattan and his compatriots than the individual now addressing you. (Cheers.) But who was it that acted thus towards the Irish people? The English Tories! (Applause.) Read the history of Ireland, and read the history of Toryism in this country, and you will see it written in letters of blood in Irish history. (Cheers.) Our Whig friends, our timid Liberal friends, have, in times past, sometimes treated the Irish in a luke-warm manner. They have not gone so broadly and thoroughly with the Irish people as I could have wished to see. But whatever may have been their shortcomings, there never has been on the part of English Tories one particle of sympathy with the free-born wishes of native Irishmen; and how they can, in this country or elsewhere, either cast their votes or give their countenance to the exponents of those principles passes my understanding. (Applause.) They may be indifferent to English Radicals; but I can't understand how they can sympathise with English Tories. (Cheers.) And if our friends are wise—I have no wish and no authority to give advice, but this I will state as my opinion, that if the Irishmen in this country are wise they will throw in their lot with the English Radicals, and through their instrumentality and by their help they will achieve for themselves a larger measure of political and national freedom than they have ever yet enjoyed. (Loud cheers.) There is not one privilege that I enjoy, there is not one advantage that I participate in as an English citizen, that I am not ready, not only to give, but to give with pleasure, and at this instant, to every Irish fellow-countryman. (Loud and continued cheers.)

SPEECH VI.

[*Christian Meeting House, Gloucester Road.*]

Mr. COWEN, whose rising was the signal for repeated outbursts of applause, said there was one point in the present contest which struck him as being peculiarly satisfactory, and that was that the issue before the electors was distinct and easily understood. He represented one set of opinions, and he hoped sincerely that the contest would be fought out on that issue—(Hear, hear)—that, in fact, there would be no unnecessary importation of personal animus or ill-nature into the conflict (Applause.) So far as he was concerned, he would entirely divest himself of any such feeling, and he hoped, when the contest was over, any asperity that might have taken place would be cleared away, and that all men, whatever their politics, would live happily and contentedly as neighbours and citizens. (Applause.) He was satisfied that mere personal controversy in matters of this kind was useless, and hence he had always pursued this course—that whenever an accusation was made against him, he never answered it. (Laughter, and hear, hear.) If a man said, “You are a fool,” he replied, “Very well, that is your opinion. Ours is a free country, and every man is at liberty to entertain his opinion.” (Great laughter.) If a man said he was dishonest, he said, “Very well, you think so, I cannot help it; all I can do is to appeal to my life and actions as against it.” (Great applause.) Their friends—he did not mean to say Mr. Hamond, for he was not aware that that gentleman had said anything; but probably some of his supporters—had not altogether followed this line of action; but he hoped their bad practices would not tempt any of those present to follow their example. (Applause.) He would say as hard things as possible against Tory opinions; he would utter as sharp language as he could command against Tory principles; but he hoped, after the election was over, it would not

be said of him that he uttered one unkind word against a political opponent. (Applause.) Englishmen were practical men. They were not, as he had said last night, and as he had said on many previous occasions, perhaps always logical in their legislative or governmental proceedings ; but they were thus satisfactory to deal with, that they judged a tree by its fruits. They asked themselves what was the result of a certain line of policy ? If those results were satisfactory, they approved ; if not satisfactory, they condemned them. (Hear, hear.) In this respect they occupied a distinct position from a Frenchman. A Frenchman was anxious for exact symmetry in his institutions. He looked upon the logical correctness of the institutions he had to serve, and very often in his anxiety for this symmetry, and for this logical completeness, he forgot the more substantial results which ought to spring from Government proceedings. The Englishman was moved by an appeal to facts. The Spaniard, very often, was moved by an appeal to his feelings. An eloquent speech from Castelar, or any other distinguished Spanish statesman, might affect the decision of the Spanish Cortes. It was scarcely so in this country, however, as we judged a tree by its fruits. (Hear, hear.) Now, just let them judge the Liberal policy by the same standard. Let them test the results of Liberal legislation in this country for the last forty years, and then see what had been the issue of that legislation. He had said before that the Liberals had been practically in power for forty years : and, during twenty-five years, they had had a Liberal policy, a Liberal Government, and they had had the operation of free trade principles. (Hear, hear.) During that twenty-five years the export trade of this country had increased at the rate of 400 per cent. (Loud applause.) For the previous seventy-five years the export trade of this country increased at the rate of 340 per cent. ; in other words, roughly stated, our export trade had increased in one quarter of a century much more rapidly than the three-quarters of a century before it. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) If they took the bulk of the goods and the value together, they might fairly say that the value of exports of this country at the present time was something like forty times as much as it was 100 years ago. That had been the practical operation of free trade legislation. (Applause.) During the last 25 years—they had it upon very high authority, upon the authority of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer—it was supposed that England made more wealth than it did in the preceding 50 years ; and they were assured on equally good authority that during the

last 50 years there had been more wealth made in the country than for 300 years before. (Hear, hear, and loud applause.) Wealth was not always the attendant or producer of moral and mental progress ; but he believed we might fairly say that in England it had brought with it an improved moral tone and a higher natural sentiment. (Cheers.) The England of to-day was not the England of 25 years ago ; and the England of to-day would not be the England of 20 years hence. A great change had taken place over the entire face of society. They had shorter hours for labour, enhanced remuneration for workpeople, and as adjuncts for these two desirable results they had had also an attempt to improve the education of the people. (Hear, hear.) He was satisfied that with this increased leisure, with these enhanced incomes, and with improved education, the moral sentiment of the people would be proportionately improved. (Loud applause.) They might, therefore, fairly say that the result of legislation and this course of action had been satisfactory. He knew they were told that this improved commercial position had not entirely resulted from legislation. Well, he was willing to admit the force of the objection. There were other things that had contributed to this result, as well as mere political changes. We owed our improved position commercially to three things—first, the application of science to manufactures ; next, to the invention and development of steam power, the laying down of railways, and otherwise ; and, in the third place, we owed it to a Liberal policy and the adoption of free trade principles. (Hear, hear, and great applause.) If they had not had the last, and probably most important element in the case, he was convinced the result would not be so satisfactory. As an illustration they must take other countries, because they could only arrive at a knowledge of their relative positions by contrast. Take for example Spain. Spain was a country of boundless national resources, immense material wealth, large rivers, extended sea coast, a bright sky, a fertile soil, and a capable population. (Hear, hear.) Look at the distracted condition in which Spain is at the present time. With all the national facilities she possessed, there was not one country in Europe in a more disordered state than she was to-day. He hoped, however, that there was a bright future before her. (Applause.) He trusted that the magnificent eloquence and glowing patriotism of Castelar would infuse new life into the people. (Great cheers.) But let them take Spain as it was, and then they would have the contrast. They might depend upon it, that there was one condi-

tion essential if commerce had to thrive, and that was confidence. If men had not confidence, there could not be any commercial prosperity. Confidence could not exist where there was not stability—political stability—and political stability could only exist where there was liberty and enlightenment. (Hear, hear, and applause.) If they took any pyramid, and turned it upon its apex instead of putting it upon its base, it could not stand the buffets of time or the attacks that might be made upon it; but, if they made the base broad and substantial, it could resist all encroachments. That was, practically, the position of this country. (Applause.) We had been successful commercially, and had enjoyed a season of social and political contentment, simply because our institutions had been gradually adapted to the growing wants and necessities of the times. (Renewed applause.) Now, Mr. Hamond had told them that he would, when he went to parliament—(laughter, and applause)—pay considerable attention to the “incidents of taxation.” (Renewed laughter.) “Incidents of taxation” was a phrase that he scarcely understood. He did not wish to be hypercritical, but he scarcely understood the meaning of that phrase—(laughter and applause)—and he feared that Mr. Hamond had written it in a hurry. (Renewed laughter.) He had no wish to put any other interpretation upon it. Well, if he should happen to go to Parliament himself he would do something like the same thing when he got there. (Hear, hear, and applause.) And he believed the same course of action ought to be pursued by all Liberal politicians, and representative men, and that was to develop the principle whose results, so far as they had been applied to this country, had been so satisfactory. They had gradually reduced the tariff, so far as a number of articles were concerned, on which taxes had been levied. (Hear, hear, and applause.) When speaking, some twenty years ago, he remembered quoting from an imaginary budget that Mr. Cobden proposed, in which that statesman said that such and such articles ought to have the taxes taken off altogether, and others reduced. Now, he believed that the imaginary budget of Mr. Cobden, which was issued in 1847 or 1848, had been fulfilled to the letter; and that what he suggested ought to be done had been done, and the result had been as just described. They might carry the principle still further than they had done. (Applause.) At the present time they had taxes upon various commodities of life that might be removed with advantage. He was of opinion that luxuries, such as tobacco, wines, spirits, and other commodi-

ties ought not to escape—(hear, hear)—and that if a man was foolish enough to let any official about his house wear hair powder, or silly enough to bear a coat of arms, or adopt any similar frivolity or absurdity of social life, then clearly that man ought to pay taxes first. (Laughter and applause.) They must have taxes, and hence they could not do better than tax these follies. In this way, if inclined to gratify such a weakness as he had described, he would be made to contribute to the State revenues. (Laughter and applause.) While taxing these luxuries, however he should take care to remove all levies upon the necessities of life. (Hear, hear.) Now, he had long had a distinct conviction that if it were possible to remove these taxes—in a sense to abolish our Custom Houses, and to make this country an absolutely free port—the commerce of this land would receive a greater impulse than ever. He knew that such a step had been contemplated by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that it might possibly be brought into practical realisation some day. (Applause.) If we had these janitors at the entrances of our ports removed, he felt satisfied that it would give an impetus to trade, and an impulse to the commercial proceedings of this country, which would redound not only to our material prosperity, but our social and intellectual progress also. (Loud applause.) He believed they might reasonably expect, in the course of a few years, if not in the next session of Parliament, to see the realisation of what Mr. Bright had very properly termed a free breakfast table. Certainly, so far as he was concerned, he should, if sent to the present or any future Parliament, give his vote in favour of such proceedings. Then their friend Mr. Hamond also made a point in favour of the redistribution of taxation. He had no doubt that that subject would be fully discussed, and it was certainly one requiring great consideration; though, when the time came, he was convinced that some of those who were urging forward the discussion would be astonished at the results that might be arrived at. He had a distinct impression that household property, and indeed the property generally in towns, would be found to be paying more than their share of the taxation of the country; while the land paid less than it ought to pay. (Hear, hear.) They would for a moment view this question dispassionately and fairly, and consider it from its historical aspect. The land of this country originally belonged, nominally, to the king. When William the Conqueror arrived in England he parcelled it out amongst his followers, who, in consideration of these grants, under-

took to render military service and to keep the county roads and bridges in repair, and otherwise contribute to the welfare of the State. These holders of the land were not "owners" of the soil, but they simply held it under the conditions he had named, and that arrangement existed for many hundreds of years. This plan was in some respects advantageous, for when some of the Plantagenet kings were anxious to engage in war, the barons of England, the holders of the land, refused to supply the requisite military forces, and the war was abandoned. This was the position of affairs up to the time of Charles the Second—about 210 years ago—when a change took place. Parliament, which consisted then of 300 members, altered the tenure from that of "holders" to that of "owners," the resolution being carried by 150 against 149. They resolved to be landowners, and in lieu of the fealty and the services they had formerly rendered, they sanctioned the levying of a tax in the form of what was now known as the Excise, and this was the origin of the imposts gathered by the Inland Revenue department. It was very soon found, however, that the king could not engage in the luxury of going to war without additional taxation and in order to raise large funds, there was imposed a tax of 4s. in the pound, which was levied on all the land of the country. This 4s. was levied on the then valuation of the land, and the tax realized one-fourth part of the whole revenue. Though since that time the value of the land has in some instances quadrupled, and in other cases it was increased in value twenty and even sixty fold, the same tax was still levied as was the case in the reign of William and Mary. Land then worth a few shillings was now worth hundreds of pounds; and while it paid then one-fourth of the taxation of the country it now only paid one sixty-fourth. Now, he submitted that if they were to have a re-adjustment of the "incidents of taxation"—as Mr. Hamond said—(great laughter)—this was one of the "incidents" that ought speedily to come under the consideration of Parliament. (Applause.) He held that it would be well when this question did come up for discussion, that the subject of the administration of county affairs should also be dealt with. In municipal boroughs the revenues were handed over to a treasurer and disposed of in accordance with the will of the people through their representatives; but in counties there was a self-elected body—very wise men no doubt, in their own judgment—(great laughter)—who administered their affairs. He said "self-elected," but that was scarcely correct; they were nominated after a peculiar fashion, for a man no

sooner happened to become possessed of a piece of land of a given value than he was deemed to be qualified to be a magistrate. (Laughter.) He did not see the sequence at all, or why a man, simply because he possessed property, should be qualified to administer justice and enforce the laws. However, it often was so. A man no sooner attained a good social position than he was made a magistrate, and he henceforth discharged the duties of a small judge. (Laughter and applause.) He thought this was a mistake, and submitted that a large number of the great "unpaid" should be relegated to their closets, and the administration of justice placed in the hands of trained men. He believed that the County Court system operated most efficiently, and the stipendiary magistrates also faithfully performed their duties; but those great county magnates who happened to have attained their position by the accidental circumstances he had mentioned, ought not to be vested with these powers, nor yet with the exclusive privilege of dispensing patronage and spending the county revenues. He would apply the same principle in the counties that was applied in towns, and give the people living in counties the power of managing county affairs. He was satisfied it would be to the advantage of the counties and contribute to the strength of the nation. Such a proposition had been made in Parliament repeatedly, but the Tories, who, as a rule, formed the majority of county magistrates, had always rejected the proposal, and the reform had never been brought about. He hoped, therefore, when the re-adjustment of the "incidents of taxation"—(laughter)—did take place, that it would be accompanied by a reform in the administration of county affairs. (Applause.) The principle that the Liberals steadfastly adhered to was that the people ought to manage their own affairs. They were their own masters. The masses of the people—men of all sects and parties and classes—were interested in the prosperity of the country. To these it owed its glory and its honour and its position; and they ought, therefore, to be invested with the power of managing their own affairs. He would rather have bungling in the management, if it were in the hands of the people, than have it left to an exclusive class to manage it for us. If they could always assure themselves that they would have a benevolent and intelligent despot, that would be a very comfortable assurance, for one man could then govern the State in a satisfactorily wise and intelligent manner,—(Laughter and applause.)—and the plan would relieve the people of a great deal of the responsibility of citizenship. But they could not have

that, for when the benevolent and wise despot disappeared, all would become chaos and confusion. Let them take the case of France at the present time. For 20 years that country was ruled by the late Emperor, and she enjoyed a fair share of material prosperity during that period. But all the political and intellectual life of France was either shut up in prison or sent into exile, and the affairs of the nation were managed by a few men. When the existing state of matters collapsed, what was the result? France was without any active public men in whom she could place the management of her affairs, and they knew the consequence. Infinitely better would it have been for France to have gone on steadily plodding in our old hum-drum fashion, achieving, little by little, the freedom we possessed, blundering as we had done, winning our way to our present position, than to have enjoyed, for a time at least, a large share of material prosperity, and afterwards to have found herself in the position she now occupies. He was satisfied that this line of policy would in the end contribute substantially to the institutions of the country and the welfare of the State. (Applause.) An election of this kind, a contest such as they were now engaged in, would disturb their social arrangements. That meeting, he had no doubt, and others, had broken up some of their festive parties at that season. (Laughter.) Many of his friends had engaged in this contest at considerable inconvenience; but still a man who enjoyed the benefits of citizenship and the blessings of a wise and Liberal Government conferred upon him, must also share in the responsibilities. He thought it would be well, therefore, instead of condemning those periodical election contests, to regard them as opportunities for the interchange of ideas and thoughts, and for the holding of reasonable and intelligent arguments. He was disposed, therefore, to support a measure for shortening the duration of Parliaments. (Applause.) The present Parliament was chosen in 1868, and the men returned at the time probably fairly represented the feeling of the country, but in these five or six years great changes had taken place. Questions that were then engrossing our thoughts had since been settled, and were no longer requiring consideration. They belonged to the reactionary times of the Tories—(loud laughter)—and need not be touched upon again. But now they were looking for something better. It would, of course, be attended with some inconvenience and discomfort, and to the gentlemen who were—foolish enough, he was going to say—to seek the office of a representative, it would be costly. Still, the balance of advantage would be in

favour of more frequent appeals to the people. The existence of Parliament at the present time was seven years ; but that was a revolutionary innovation, for the old system used to be triennial. At one time, indeed, when the king summoned Parliament it was simply for the purpose of discharging certain duties and performing certain work, and then it was dismissed. Afterwards they were called together for three years, and that practice existed to the time of the Stuarts. When the partizans of the Pretender appealed to this country, there was a fear that if the Parliament was dismissed at that time, as it ought to have been—that was at the three years end—it was possible that the followers of the Pretender would have a majority. Therefore, in order to prevent the Jacobites getting there, the duration of the Parliament was extended from three to seven years. It was just the same in France at the present time. They knew that if they appealed to the country many would never go back—(laughter)—and they had resolved amongst themselves to hold to their places and their salaries. (More laughter.) It was much the same in George the First's time, in 1716, when they determined that, instead of Parliament being dismissed at the end of every three years they should sit for seven. What, he should like to know, would be the repeal of the Septennial Act, and the return to the old lines of the constitution. He would have an appeal to the people every three years. (Loud applause.) There were many amongst us active, busy, and in the full tide of existence last New Year's eve who were now gone from our midst ; and there were many enjoying themselves this New Year's eve who would perhaps not be with us next year ; but he hoped these serious considerations would not distract them from the discharge of their political and national duties. For his part, he had faith in the truth of the principles he had endeavoured to expound ; confidence in the good sense and intelligence of his countrymen, and he hoped there was a better and a brighter future yet in store for them. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. COWEN replying to a question as to whether he desired to abolish the Throne and the House of Lords, said, I will answer the gentleman's question most distinctly. Our friend is at perfect liberty to ask the question as to whether I would alter our constitution. Gentlemen, I will give my views on that question. I never had a view in my life on public matters that I was afraid to utter. (Cheers and laughter.) I never held a principle or advocated a cause that I did not conscientiously and honestly believe to be true. (Hear, hear.) Our opponents are making a great

noise about this business. (Laughter.) Just listen. You ask me if I am going to change the constitution? I believe my friend, Mr. Watson, will correct me if I am wrong, that when a man is called upon to give evidence before a court of law, the position he has to take is this—he has first to give a distinct answer to a distinct question, and can then accompany that answer with his explanation. Now if my friend asks me whether I would alter the constitution of this country and abolish the Throne, I distinctly say I would not—I never thought of such a thing. (Loud applause.) If he asks me, on the other hand, if I believe in the abstract righteousness and soundness of Republican principles, I say “Yes.” (Cheers.) But it is quite possible for a man to believe in the abstract soundness of a political principle, and to say at the same time that it is not either wise or judicious to put that principle in force in this country. (Applause.) Now that is exactly my position. (Hear, and applause.) There are two abstract forms of government in this world as far as I know—one is the rule by an individual, a despotic government, and the other is the rule by the people. The despotic form of government obtains in Russia, where there is a despot who is master of the people, they being his slaves and serfs (though I think that is abolished); but he is, at any rate, the master of the situation. (Hear, hear.) There are other countries where the people are the masters of their own destinies, and their own rulers. Now, in this country we have got a constitution which combines all these conditions. We have got in this country practically a Republic—not in form but in substance. We have all the essential elements of a Republican Constitution in this land. The people can do practically what they think proper; they can rule as they choose; they are the masters of their own destinies; and any change they may wish to have they can make. (Cheers.) I repeat, they are absolutely the masters of their own destinies in this matter. The despotic form of government does not exist—(applause)—and while I say that, I have a distinct belief with the most of my fellow-countrymen, the masses of Englishmen at the present time—and I share most thoroughly their opinions—that there is no country in the world with a larger amount of practical freedom than this. I for one as an individual trust I shall not live to see any alteration in the constitution of this land, yet, as an abstract theory, as a mere piece of political reasoning, I say that the Republican form of government is the highest form I know of. (Applause and cheers.) I think that the government of the people by themselves through

their representatives is the best form of governing. In this country we have got it practically if not in theory. We have an hereditary monarchy; but our house of Commons is really the ruler of the destinies of this land. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Gladstone, as Prime Minister, or even Mr. Disraeli if in power, is practically king. He is the real monarch of the country; and if we wish to change our political constitution we have simply to change these ministers. They are the greatest authorities and powers of this land. I do not really think that, because of the simple fact that I happen to hold, as thousands of my fellow-countrymen hold, that the abstract Republican form of government is the highest form of Government, this is any disqualification, so far as I am concerned, for my engaging in practical politics in this country. If I have to go to Parliament, as I possibly may have—I do not know—(laughter)—I will take the oath of allegiance and fealty to her Majesty the Queen, and I shall take that with pleasure. (Cheers.) I do not believe that in this broad Britain there is one man who will take it more conscientiously, or defend it with more resolution. (Renewed cheers.) This cry, gentlemen, of “Republicanism,” is a mere red herring to lead you off the scent. (Loud laughter and cheers.) It is a mere attempt to raise a storm, a hubbub about my candidature, as I happen to be the representative of the Liberal party in this town. (Hear, hear.) But it will not be successful, gentlemen! When did these Tories get their newly-inspired confidence and respect for her Majesty the Queen? (Hear, hear.) Do they imagine that we have not some knowledge of the history of the Queen’s reign, and of her accession to the throne? Are they not aware that the Tories of this country had a cabal against her Majesty, and were anxious to hand the throne of this country over to the Tory Duke of Cumberland? (Loud cheers.) Are they not aware that her Majesty the Queen had for her personal advisers Lord Melbourne, a Liberal statesman, and Mr. Joseph Hume, a Radical politician? That they were her Majesty’s friends, and that through their guidance to some extent and through their teaching to a great extent, we owe the mild rule that we have lived under during her reign? Of course, it is not a matter of any consequence, I dare say, whether my opinion of her Majesty is good or bad, but this I do say, that I have the very warmest regard for her Majesty the Queen, and I have it for this reason, gentlemen, simply as a Radical politician, and as an advocate of advanced political thought in this country. For this reason, I say it to the lasting glory and

honour of her Majesty, that she has never, in any one instance, stood between the people and their freedom. (Loud and continued cheers.) If our Tory friends have not read, I have read the history of the last fifty years. (Hear, hear.) I have some knowledge of the doings of George IV.; I have some acquaintance with the negotiations that were carried on by Liberal ministers in the time of William IV., with a view to getting his assent to the passing of the Reform Bill. Any man who wishes to read the history of that time, and know the difficulties the Liberal statesmen had to contend with, had better read Lord Grey's history of his father's life when he was passing the Reform Bill, and who knew the difficulties of having a hostile king who opposed the Liberal measures of that day. (Applause.) Now, gentlemen, during her Majesty's reign we have had more advanced measures passed in the last twenty-five years than had previously been passed in this country for five times that period, and I say this with pleasure and with thankfulness, that on no one occasion has her Majesty ever interposed or placed any obstacle in the way of the passing of these measures. Her Majesty has been content to say, "Whatever the people will they shall have it." If they wish to have free trade they shall have it. (Applause.) If they wish for the Church in Ireland to be disestablished and disendowed, they shall have it. If they wish for an increased and extended reform in Parliament, they shall have it. (Cheers.) Nay, furthermore, and even more to her honour will I say it: When the measure for the abolition of purchase in the army was brought forward, she had the courage, without hesitation, to acquiesce in Mr. Gladstone's proposal; and when the House of Lords threw out that measure she had the courage to assent to the abolition of purchase in the army by the simple edict of herself. (Loud cheers.) I repeat, then, for the advantage of my friend over there—(loud laughter, and applause)—that as a matter of intellectual reasoning as a mere matter of abstract speculation, that the Republican is the highest form of Government that is known to man. (Cheers, and "What about the House of Lords.") If my friend will let me, I will answer him about the House of Lords, too. I have nothing to be at all frightened of; and he need never try to drive me into a corner. (Loud applause and laughter.) If he imagines, or any of his friends think, that by assailing me with questions of that kind, they will prevent me from uttering what I think is proper, and what I think to be true, they are quite mistaken. (Increased laughter and applause.) I am going to answer the first part of the

question, and I hope to his satisfaction. However, whether it is to his satisfaction or not, this is my answer. (Laughter.) I repeat once more, that as a mere abstract opinion, the Republican form of government is the highest form of government that we know of—(hear, hear)—but with respect to our form of government now existing, which is a mixture of Republican principles and, I may say, monarchical practices in some respects, in the highest branches of it, I believe it is a highly satisfactory form, and that it gives us a larger measure of practical freedom than any other country in the world enjoys. (Applause.) I shall for one support it most resolutely and earnestly, for I have no wish to see the constitution altered. (Cheers.) I would enforce, as a matter of teaching, the practical simplicity of the Republican form of government as a mere speculative opinion, divested of all the trappings and unnecessary and barbaric show of monarchy. (Hear, hear.) But that is a mere matter of abstract opinion; the practical issue is just as I have said. (Cheers.) There is one more question—whether I would abolish the House of Lords? My own opinion is that in this country it is wise to have two houses of legislature. (Hear, hear.) I think that sometimes the House of Lords has been very stupid—(laughter)—and has often placed itself between the people and measures of Parliamentary and other reform—its course of action has not been very wise on many occasions—I think, however, that the feeling of the people of this country is in favour of two assemblies. It is a question whether—and I believe many of the Lords themselves support the view—that instead of being a purely hereditary body, they might not be, in a measure, an elective body. (Applause.) This is a change, however, that probably may not take place for the next ten or twenty years at least, but I for one support the existence of two bodies in this country—you can call them either the Upper and Lower Houses, or a Senate and a Congress—one to act, to some extent, as a court of revision over the other; and if the proposal were made that a certain number of members, or all the members of that body, should be elected by elected representatives, by the other House of Parliament, or by the people, or only a portion of them, I would be disposed to support that. (Cheers.) I am satisfied that many members of the House of Lords would be very glad to be representatives in the way I have described. (Hear, hear.) I am reminded that the Scotch Lords meet in Holyrood and appoint representatives to go to Parliament, and formerly, to some extent,

the Irish Lords followed the same course of action. It is my view that it is desirable to have two Houses of Parliament, and that the popular House—the House of Commons—must be elected on the broadest possible basis, while a portion, at least, of the members of the House should be elected. Well, is our friend satisfied now? (Cheers and laughter.)



SPEECH VII.

[*School-room, Wilfrid Street, Byker.*]

FOUR UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES—THE CIVIL LIST—THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL
—THE PATENT LAWS—THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT—FOREIGN
POLITICS.

On rising to speak, Mr. COWEN said that there was once a gentleman sent to Parliament, named Hamilton, who had a considerable reputation before he went there, as a public speaker. The reputation that he possessed abroad, and among his friends, was not so great as was the estimate which he himself had of his own capacity. When he got to the House of Commons he made one speech, and that speech was marked by a fair amount of ability. He never afterwards, however, addressed the House, and he was known to the end of his life as "single-speech Hamilton." (Laughter.) Now, his opponent in this contest had delivered a speech in the New Town Hall, a week ago—"not a speech," and renewed laughter)—and he had been going about from one part of the borough to the other since then, talking to various audiences, but instead of finding something new to say, he had merely broken that speech into fragments for the purpose of re-delivering it to the electors. (Great laughter and applause.) Under these circumstances, he thought he might fairly conclude that Mr. Hamond was entitled to be called single-speech Hamond, for all the addresses he had delivered were substantially the same. (Applause.) He had no wish to be hard upon his opponent, but he thought he might fairly say that this address of his was not characterised by a large amount of political thought, nor by any extensive amount of political information. Mr. Hamond had spoken somewhat strongly concerning him, and had said he was a blatant spouter

who addressed the people from a washing tub. (Great laughter, and "Never mind.") Well, now, the word "blatant" came from the word "bleat," which had reference to sheep, and it was usually supposed to convey the impression that a man who was a blatant speaker was rather of a cowardly character. Now, whatever other peculiarities his speaking or character might have, he did not think it could be said that there was anything cowardly about them. (Applause.) And although he had addressed audiences in all manner of places, and from various curious elevations, he did not believe he had ever yet been elevated upon that very useful domestic article—a washing tub. (Great laughter and applause.)

FOUR UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES.

He had just been perusing his friend's addresses, for the second time, in order to see if there was anything in them which he had not previously noticed, and which he might fairly comment upon. He had discovered that there were four charges which Mr. Hamond had made and re-made—which he had reiterated and re-iterated—in the various meetings he had held about the town. In the first place, it was stated that he (Mr. Cowen) was a Republican with a very destructive tendency; in the next place, it was alleged that he was averse to either Bible reading or teaching in schools; next, that he was an individual who sought to set class against class, and man against man; and, in the fourth place, it was supposed that he had some particular desire to dictate to the people of Newcastle. (Laughter and applause.) These were the main charges which Mr. Hamond had made and re-made repeatedly during this last week. (Hisses.) With reference to the accusation of Republicanism, he could only say that he had explained it as explicitly as an honest and conscientious man could explain it. He had said that, as a mere matter of speculative opinion, he believed—as the greater number of intelligent Englishmen believed—in the essential principles of a Republican form of Government; but he added that it was one thing to believe in a mere speculative opinion, and another thing to try to put it into operation. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Now, there were two forms of Government. First, there was the Government by another; and, next, there was the Government of the people by themselves, and for themselves. The Government of the people by another was personal and was represented in an autocratic and despotic country. The Government for themselves and by themselves was fairly represented by

a popular form of Government. (Hear, hear.) In this country, however, we possessed a Government which combined the two—which in theory was Monarchical, and which in practice was Republican. (Loud applause.) There was not one liberty which a reasonable human being might ask for, that could not here be obtained. (Hear, hear, and great cheering.) There was not one right which a reasonable and intelligent man might fairly ask to be possessed of, that he could not obtain through the instrumentality of our Constitution. (Renewed cheers.) So far, therefore, as he was personally concerned, he had no wish whatever to alter in any way the Constitution of our country. He made bold to assert, indeed, that if there was one thing more clear than another in England, it was that the Republicans were amongst the most loyal of our citizens. For this reason, the cardinal doctrine of all Republicans was that they, the majority, must rule. Now, if this was the first principle of Republican thought, what need was there for anxiety? Would any man say that the majority of the people of this country were not in favour of the Constitution as it now existed? Unquestionably and beyond all dispute, 99 out of every 100 persons in this country were in favour of the mixed constitution we now possessed. (Hear, hear.) This being so, the simple fact that a man was a Republican bound him to observe the constitution which was upheld by the will and the wish of the majority. The attempt to show that a man, because he happened to believe in a speculative political opinion, and had the candour to announce it, must of necessity be disloyal, was as absurd as it was uncalled for. He repeated, therefore, that a belief in Republican opinions was in itself an evidence that a man would be and must be amongst the most loyal of her Majesty's subjects. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) The next point alleged against him was that he opposed the Bible. Well, now, that accusation was simply false—(hear, hear)—and the man who made it, and the man who repeated it, knew it to be false. (Loud applause.) A number of the gentlemen who supported his candidature on the first occasion, and who belonged to the same school of politics as himself, had long held similar views to his own on the question of education; but still they had given the best years of their lives, and the best energies of their nature, to teach voluntarily and freely the principles which were found in the Bible. (Loud applause.) It was simply a piece of impertinence for any man to say that they held views opposed to the Bible. (Renewed applause.) What they did say was this: that in any schools

established by the ratepayers, and supported by their money—seeing that the ratepayers belonged to all classes and all parties—there should be no theological or controversial doctrines taught; but that, apart from the time devoted to elementary instruction in those schools, all sects and all parties might teach their religious faith, always provided that they did it voluntarily and at their own expense. (Loud cheers.) Then, again it was alleged that he had striven to set class against class. This imputation was as false as the rest. (Hear, hear, and great applause.) He had no wish to make contrasts; but he would say that he was a larger employer of labour than Mr. Hamond. He would even go further, and say that, directly and indirectly, he was interested in manufacturing, mining, and commercial pursuits, employing a larger number of workmen, or at least as large a number, as any of the gentlemen he had yet seen connected with Mr. Hamond's committee—(hear, hear)—and, therefore, he would ask them whether, on the ordinary grounds of self-interest, it was reasonable to suppose that he would try to create class hatred when his own interests were so directly concerned. (“No,” and applause.) This he had said, and he now repeated it: That in matters of trade disputes it did not always happen that justice and truth were on one side. (Hear, hear.) Sometimes the employers were in error, and sometimes the workmen; and therefore, in trying to settle these disputes, he had always insisted that justice should be observed by both parties, and that kindness, consideration, and fair dealing should characterise the various modes by which such a result was sought to be achieved. (Applause.) He had no wish to refer to his own action in such matters; but he must say that there had been three or four very serious trade contentions in this locality, and he had to some extent, he would not say largely, been instrumental in bringing the conflicts to a peaceable issue. (Hear, hear.) He had never heard of his opponent being engaged in similar work. (Laughter and applause.) The next statement was that he wished to dictate to the people of Newcastle. Just conceive the folly, the ridiculousness of such a charge! (Great laughter.) How was it possible for one man, or twenty men, to dictate to a large and independent constituency like this? He mentioned the circumstance—not with indignation, it was not worth it—but merely to cast it aside with contempt and with a smile. (Loud applause.) Now, he had been unable to find anything but these things in Mr. Hamond's speech. (“There's plenty of self-praise,” and roars of laughter.) Well,

they could allow him to praise himself, poor man, because, if they did not, it was quite clear that nobody else could be found to do it. (Great laughter and applause.) There were one or two other statements made by Mr. Hamond that were equally erroneous. That gentleman had said, for instance, that the Liberal Government was increasing the expenditure of the country. ("Nonsense," and hear, hear.) Now, at St. Anthony's he had produced figures sufficient to prove the utter worthlessness of the assertion, and as Mr. Hamond had never referred to the matter again, he supposed he had quietly admitted that the answer was a complete one. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Another of that gentleman's statements was that the Tory party always had been, and now were, the supporters of civil and religious liberty. (Great laughter and applause.) On this subject also he had taken some little trouble to go into an historical resume with respect to the action of the Tory party, and he thought he had demonstrated to all reasonable men that whatever other claim the Tory party in this country might have to the support or confidence of the people, they could not base that claim on any service they had rendered to the cause of civil and religious liberty. (Applause.) They could afford, therefore, to put both those assertions aside without further comment. There was one matter which, as illustrating Mr. Hamond's position, they might just go into with some detail.

THE CIVIL LIST.

Mr. Hamond had made a statement, in answer to a question, to the effect that the sum of money now paid annually to the Queen of England was in consideration of certain royal properties having been surrendered to the nation at the commencement of the Hanoverian reign, somewhere about the time of George the 1st. Mr. Hamond also said that the Queen, by her voluntary action, retained to herself the properties in the Duchy of Cornwall, and that she handed them over to the Prince of Wales. (Laughter.) If the audience would give attention for a few minutes he would endeavour to show that this statement, simple as it was, was incorrect in two particulars; and that it conveyed, in the third place, an erroneous impression. (Hear, hear.) First, then, Mr. Hamond said that the payment of a fixed sum to the Sovereign began in the reign of George the 1st. Well, that was simply incorrect. (Hear, hear.) It did not begin in the reign of George the 1st, but it started at the commencement of the reign of Queen

Victoria, thirty-six years ago last month, or, to be exact, in December, 1837. (Laughter and applause.) As Mr. Hamond liked to be particular, he might add that 1st Vic. chap. 2, was the Act under which the arrangement was made. (Renewed laughter.) This showed that their friend had spoken in entire ignorance of his subject. (Loud applause.) The arrangement was this. There existed in this country, long ago, lands which were known in ancient times as folk-lands, or rather lands that belonged to the sovereigns of the country. These lands were not their own property. They did not belong to the Kings or Queens of England as a piece of private property, but they belonged to the nation, and the sovereigns received the rents or revenues. In consideration of these rents and revenues they undertook to discharge certain duties. (Hear, hear.) There were three duties that they were chiefly called upon to discharge. First, to maintain the dignity, or, as some called it, the splendour of the Crown—the Monarchical institutions; in the second place, they were called upon to pay the expenses of certain ambassadors and representatives to foreign countries, who were necessary for carrying on the intercommunication between this and other nations; and, in the next place, they were expected to furnish oak timber from their forests and parks sufficient to supply wood for the building of our ships. (Applause.) The property thus vested for the lifetime of each monarch consisted of 1,422 royal manors, 68 forests, 13 chases, and 781 parks. Some of these forests were of great extent. Even to this day the royal forest at Windsor was 66 miles round. Now, he repeated that the Crown, or the King or Queen for the time being, received the rents of all this property for discharging the duties which he had specially mentioned. At the death of William the Norman the sum of money that this property brought to him amounted to £1,062 per day, or £370,000 per annum. That sum, calculated at the present value of money, would be equal to £10,000,000 a year, and yet it only now raised £70,000. All that money representing the difference between £70,000 and £10,000,000 had been abstracted in some instances for good national purposes, and in others for improper purposes. The Plantagenets, when they reigned, fairly fulfilled their duties, and did not abstract the property, but when the Tudors came they were more greedy, and made encroachments. Queen Elizabeth sold a considerable portion to raise funds for a very proper purpose—to enable the people of that time to defeat the Spanish Armada. James I. sold some of the property to repay his disso-

lute favourites, and Charles I. sold it to prevent his having to call Parliament together. Oliver Cromwell sold a considerable portion of it, and used the money for the civil war in which he was engaged, and when Charles II. came to the throne, he dispossessed those who had bought of Cromwell, and when he got it back, dispensed the larger portion of it among his illegitimate children and dissolute companions. William III., our Prince of Orange, rewarded many of his adherents with gifts of land in a similar way. Thus this property was frittered away, until from being worth £10,000,000, it was reduced to the annual revenue of £70,000. Well, then, our Hanoverian Sovereigns found this income too small to meet the requirements of their position, and George III., on more than one occasion, had to apply to Parliament for subsidies. George IV. got repeatedly into debt, and had to ask Parliament to pay his debts. When the Queen came to the throne it was agreed that a fixed sum of money should be granted to her per annum, and all this property taken into the hands of the nation to manage as they thought proper. The Queen was to have the fixed sum of £385,000 per annum civil list, and the same Act of Parliament which gave her that sum settled that the succeeding monarch was to have £200,000, and the monarch after that £150,000. Whether that clause were carried out future times would show, but for the present it was sufficient to say that the revenue of the Queen was fixed at £385,000 a year. But, at the same time, it must not be supposed that the Queen had this amount of money to spend as she thought proper. £61,000 she had at her absolute personal disposal, but the other went for expenses that the Queen had no more control over than any of themselves. There was paid for household and retired allowances £131,000, for household expenses £172,500, for royal bounties £13,200, for pensions £1,200, and £8,040 for miscellaneous expenses. These sums of money were spent ostensibly in the name of Her Majesty, but virtually by command of the House of Commons, and therefore one might take Her Majesty's income at £60,000 for her privy purse. In addition to that, she had six or seven royal residences, including Windsor, Buckingham Palace, Marlborough House, Kew, Hampton Court, and Holyrood Palace, but Her Majesty did not occupy more than two of these. She occupied Windsor for a few months of the year, and occasionally held Court in Buckingham Palace, but the others were, greatly to Her Majesty's credit, left by her to be inhabited by persons of high rank, who were perhaps in reduced circumstances.

and had not the means to live comfortably themselves. In the residences which the Queen did occupy there was a great deal expended for household expenses—for the salaries of Grooms of the Chamber, and he could not exactly say what other officers, but it was well known that the keeping of this large staff about Her Majesty's person was excessively repugnant to the Queen herself, for there was no one more attached to privacy or more glad to escape from the influences surrounding her, to her own private residences of Balmoral or Osborne. He repeated that he made these statements and explanations to show that Mr. Hamond was wrong, and to show that what took place with regard to the Civil List took place in the reign of the present Queen, and not in the reign of George I.

THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

In the second place, Mr. Hamond made a statement to the effect that the Queen reserved to herself the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall for her eldest son, and this statement was just about as correct as the other, (Hear, hear.) for the Duchy of Cornwall was really a perquisite of the eldest son of the Crown, and it had been so for the last 500 years, neither Parliament nor the monarch having any power to interfere with it. It arose in this way. The Ancient Britons, not being subjugated by either the Romans or the Saxons, were driven into the wilds and retreated to Cornwall and Wales. They resisted the combined power of the Saxon kings and of the Norman kings after William for two or three hundred years, until the reign of Edward the Third, who made a vigorous attack, and being an able general and a capable monarch, he was successful in subjugating Wales and Cornwall. Partly by force of arms and partly by persuasion, he brought the inhabitants of Cornwall and Wales under the control of his Government, and he made this arrangement with them, that in future his eldest son should be Duke of Cornwall and Prince of Wales, and in addition to these titles should enjoy the revenues of the Duchy and the Principality, and after him such titles and revenues to descend also to the heirs of the throne. When, therefore, Mr. Hamond spoke of the Queen reserving to herself the revenues of Cornwall, he spoke without information, and said what was not correct. Mr. Hamond had only a glimmering of what was the fact, and probably what he meant to say was that the Queen held in her own right the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster. The same king that settled the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall on

his heir apparent settled the Duchy of Lancaster on the sovereign. Edward III. gave it to Henry Plantagenet, and his daughter married John o'Gaunt, one of the sons of Edward III., from which marriage sprang those historical wars called the Wars of the Roses. Out of that dispute arose the settlement he referred to, and now the Queen, in addition to the £385,000 voted her by Parliament every year, had also the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster. These amounted to a comparatively small sum—only from £10,000 to £13,000 per annum, and as they knew, Mr. John Bright, the distinguished leader of the Radical party, was Chancellor of Lancaster. (Cheers.) He had been elaborate because Mr. Hamond made statements in a random manner, and unless one followed them to their source it was impossible to understand the full amount of their incorrectness. He simply quoted these incorrect statements as specimens, and perhaps "the sample was like the sack." (Cheers and laughter.)

THE PATENT LAWS.

Most of Mr. Hamond's assertions were much of the same character. For instance, he made an assertion with reference to the Patent Laws. He stated that he was not opposed to these laws, and properly so, because they all admitted that if a man made and patented a discovery he was entitled to the protection of the law for a certain number of years. But he expressed himself as opposed to the administration of these Patent Laws, on the ground that the law officers of the Crown got a very large sum of money from parties who took out patents. Now, on this point Mr. Hamond was entirely wrong. It used to be so, but was not so now. He (Mr. Cowen) had said at a previous meeting that our Liberal Governments, and especially the Government of Mr. Gladstone, had made great changes in the administration of finance in this country, and one of these was that large sums of money received by the different officers of the Government now went entirely into the Exchequer, and these officers were paid by fixed salary. This was just a case in point. In former years, and until within a very recent date, Her Majesty's Solicitor and Attorney-General were paid mainly and almost exclusively from fees, and in 1862, the late Sir William Atherton, member for Durham, who was Solicitor-General at one time, and Attorney-General afterwards, was said to have received £12,000 or £15,000 to £20,000 from these patent fees. And one of the wise changes which the Liberal Government had made—and made in the face of Tory opposition—

(cheers)—was that those fees now went into the national Exchequer, the Solicitor-General and Attorney-General receiving salaries in lieu of such fees. (Hear, hear.) This, as he had said, was a recent change, and if it had not yet come absolutely into operation, would do so in the course of a very few months. Thus, on current politics, as well as historical questions, his opponent was in error. There was another point.

THE CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

Mr. Hamond had spoken on two or three occasions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. When asked his opinion of it at the Town Hall a week ago, he said he would consider the Act with a view to its amendment—a vague answer, but it certainly was an answer. Asked again, he said it required no amendment, being the same for the employer as for the workmen ; and, when asked a third time, he gave some explanation different from and contrary to the second. Wrong on questions of history and current politics, it appeared that Mr. Hamond was also wrong on a question of law. (A voice : “A barrister-at-law, too.” Another voice : “Aye, a briefless one.”) Of course it was for the inhabitants of Newcastle to select whom they liked to send to Parliament. But it was incumbent on both candidates to state their opinions, and if one heard another going about making incorrect statements, he had a right to correct them. He did not say Mr. Hamond made these incorrect statements intentionally—whether it arose from recklessness of statement or from ignorance he could not tell ; it might be one or both—but in either case, he declared that so far as such political opinions and statements went, they were neither wise nor entitled to the confidence of the constituency. (Cheers.)

FOREIGN POLITICS.

Mr. Hamond had been speaking the other night about our foreign relations, and if they would kindly listen, he would like to read them this most extraordinary statement made with respect to foreign politics :—

“The progress they had made was through their being essentially Christian in character, and through not forgetting that they owned a Providence. Who gave them intellect to make them the proud little nation that they were ? And if they had any aggression in relation to their foreign character it was only because the necessity of their lives depended on England freeing herself from her enemies. They must remember that upon foreign countries

they depended for almost every article of human food being sent, and as they increased in population they must of necessity have more means to feed the nation: and when those means were exhausted they must again look for means to preserve their independence. Therefore, they would see at once that it was not a spirit of aggression, but simply that of self-defence and of vitality that caused them to keep steadfast to their foreign relations." (Laughter.)

Now, he would ask whether there was either grammar or sense in this row of sentences. He had tried in vain to see the drift of them, and did not believe Mr. Hamond would be able to find it out himself. (Cheers and laughter.) In this he criticised his opponent good naturedly, and would not like to say an offensive word against him personally; but he would say that it confirmed what he had said at the commencement that, whatever other qualifications Mr. Hamond might have, he did not possess a large amount of political knowledge. And other qualifications would scarcely fit him for the duties of a legislator, however much they might fit him for the discharge of other duties. He might be an excellent councillor, and a competent adviser on legal questions, but so far as his declared opinions were concerned, they could inspire no one with confidence in the assertion that he was a fit person to represent the masses of the population in Parliament. (Loud cheers.)



SPEECH VIII.

[*Copland Place School Room, Shieldfield.*]

Mr. Cowen observed that he intended during the evening to reply to numerous questions which he had not had time previously to answer. Before going into them, however, he would make a few general remarks and then submit himself to any criticism, or mental inspection, or political either—(laughter)—to which they might please to subject him. (Applause.) During the past ten days or a fortnight the good people of Newcastle had been presented with a few very burlesque characters of himself and his opinions. (Laughter.) But the account they had presented was simply incorrect. (Applause.) He did not say it was intentionally false. (Laughter.) He hoped it was not. Anyway, he went upon the principle of treating his neighbours and fellow-countrymen as though they did not intentionally or consciously impute improper motives to any one. (Hear, hear.) If they did so, so much the worse for them. The individual against whom the imputations were directed—if he had any real metal in him—was not permanently injured. (Applause.) A man who had been engaged in active political life as much as he had, could not expect to have all plain sailing. (Laughter and applause.) It would be unreasonable to expect that it could be so when he had given expression, as he must have done during these last twenty years, to opinions that must have been distasteful to many of the inhabitants of Newcastle; and it was unreasonable to expect that when they had the opportunity which a contested election afforded, they would not avail themselves of it. He recollected a story told by a friend of his to this effect. His party had nominated him as a candidate in the South of England, and so, when he went home at night, he asked his wife whether there was anything that could be said against her. (Loud laughter.) If there was she was to be candid and tell him of it—(renewed laughter)—because it was morally

certain that if the Tories could say anything against her, or himself, or the bairns they would do so. (Roars of laughter.) His friend's wife was, of course, much astonished at the question, but really there was a certain measure of truth in what he said. When a man entered into a political contest he must make up his mind to give and take. (Applause.) In a little time it all passes away; though what was good in a man might be remembered, while what was bad disappeared. (Applause.) There were many great historical characters who had had a sort of resurrection—a mental resurrection—within these last few years. They recollected what a distorted burlesque of a character was presented by the earlier historians of the great Protector Cromwell. He was according to them the embodiment of all that was false and bad and malicious and contemptible; there was not a single man in the whole chapter of the English history who was more deserving of condemnation than that great ruler was! For centuries that estimate of his character was accepted; but now Carlyle had entirely rehabilitated the character of Cromwell—(applause)—and he stood before us, not as a man without a blemish or without a spot, but still as a great and noble Englishman. (Cheers.) Another distinguished historian, Mr. Froude, had investigated the character and examined the antecedents of a Tudor sovereign of this country, and the estimate of that Queen—he meant Queen Mary of England—whose name was associated in many of their memories as “Bloody Mary,” had been shown to be entirely erroneous. (Applause.) She was proved to have been a woman of great ability and of intense earnestness, and many of the crimes that partizan historians had laid to her charge were not borne out by evidence, for most of those censurable actions were done by parties over whom she had no control. (Applause.) In more recent times, even in the recollection of some present, an amount of odium had been thrown upon the personal character of men who were engaged in political controversy. The names of Horne Tooke, Hardy, and Thelwall—three men who stood in the gap and defended political liberty with so much vigour—were stained, if they looked at the current history, with crimes which could scarcely be characterised darkly enough. And yet Horne Tooke, who was a clergyman of the Church of England, Hardy, who was a working shoemaker in London—to whom a monument in one of the largest cemeteries had been erected—and Thelwall, were now held in high esteem for their advocacy of popular rights and national freedom; and there was not a historian of these days who did not commend their proceedings with cordi-

ality and cheerfulness. (Applause.) And so it would be in a much narrower field and a much smaller area. They would find that after this election was over many of their Tory friends would regret a good many of the unpleasant and harsh things they had said about the Liberal candidate. (Applause.) Their uncalled-for sneers, if not forgotten, would be to some extent regretted. They were now on the eve of a great Parliamentary election, a contest in which great interests were at stake—(applause)—and when conflicting interests would come into collision. He hoped that all of them would endeavour to discharge the duty that belonged to them as men and as Englishmen. (Applause.) He trusted that none of them would shirk the duty that the constitution threw upon them. Whatever their opinions, let them honestly, manfully, and in the spirit of independence record them at the polling booth. (Cheers.) The duty that they were going to discharge on the day of election was a sacred duty. (Applause.) It was one that had been fought for by our ancestors with a determination and energy that redounded to their lasting credit, and shed a halo of glory around their memories. (Loud cheers.) Many a noble Englishman had gone to prison; hundreds of men had gone into exile, and had perished on the scaffold, or the battlefield, in defence of the right which they were now about to exercise. (Cheers.) The memory of those struggles, the recollection of those efforts would be sufficient incentive to them to discharge the duty with conscientiousness and earnestness. As they were on the eve of a great constitutional battle it would be well for them for a few moments to cast their mind's eye back over the troubled period of English history through which this right had come down to us. The time was in England when the masses of our countrymen did not possess this right; but still the power of managing the national affairs was an old one—a right that was given to Englishmen years, nay, centuries, ago. In the old Saxon times the people had the right of electing men to sit in the national councils. When the country was split up in seven kingdoms, known as the Heptarchy, our Saxon forefathers met in their great councils or meetings of wise men, called Wittenagemote, and there settled the national affairs much as we settled them now. When the Heptarchy was consolidated into one kingdom there was established what might be called a common council of the nation, and from that had sprung in a sense our present House of Commons. That common council had three duties to discharge. First, it settled the laws that were to govern the people. Next

it adjusted disputes as to property ; and lastly it imposed taxes upon the people. These three duties were discharged by our Saxon forefathers, practically by a House of Commons. But with the advent of the Norman a change came over the country. The legislative institutions that had been established by the Saxons were abolished, and a new system was founded that had influenced very largely, for better or worse, the history of this country. The Normans established what was commonly known as the feudal system—a system which, in some of its ramifications had come down even to the present day. That feudal system recognised three parties in the State. First, the King or Sovereign. All the land belonged to him, and he, in his turn meted it out to the barons, who held it in fief. Some had larger holdings, some smaller, according to the service they had rendered to the monarch. They owed to the king fealty ; they swore to defend him in time of foreign aggression or civil warfare ; and in consideration of enjoying the territory allotted to them they also undertook, according to the extent of their lands, to supply the sovereign with a certain number of armed men in the event of hostility. There were up and down the country at that time some sixty thousand knights' fees, and for every knights' fee the baron holding it was called upon to find one armed horse soldier, properly equipped and ready for battle. The king could, therefore, at any time, call upon something like 60,000 armed soldiers ready for battle. These barons were the second-class or party in the State : but outside them there was a third rank or condition, men in every sense serfs or vassals, and dependant upon the barons. They again held such land under the barons as the latter were unable themselves to cultivate ; and in consideration of these lands, they contributed a certain amount of military service and provisions to the state. This was a basis of the feudal system. But the early Plantagenet kings found they could not engage in hostilities with foreign foes without something in addition to thier mere baronial militia. It was necessary to have funds as well as men, and the result was they applied to the barons to levy taxes. The barons refused to comply with the demand, and then took place that memorable gathering at Runnymede, where the barons told King John they would allow him a certain amount of taxation providing they received in return certain national legislative or parliamentary privileges. These national rights were secured at Runnymede by the archbishops, the bishops, and barons of England, and this was the foundation of the British House of

of Lords. That was about the year 1215 or 1216, at which time the commonalty of England—the body of the English people excepting the barons—had no political rights. There were planted up and down the country large numbers of castles, which were occupied by the barons, and around these castles were gathered for protection numbers of the ordinary people of the country. Taking Newcastle, for example, where a castle was planted, the people flocked under its walls with the view of securing the protection that the powerful baron was able to afford. Similar castles were erected at Durham, Berwick, and at other places. Our ancient towns were formed by the clustering of the people around these strongholds, which came to be in time the centres of small colonies, and which ultimately swelled into large towns. In that manner the town of Newcastle and others were developed. The people so accumulated became a power in the state, and the kings began to recognise their usefulness and importance, and when the first Parliament was assembled by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Liecester, he summoned representatives from the counties, known as Knights of the Shire, each county sending two, while the cities sent two citizens, and the boroughs two burgesses each. That was the beginning of the first British Parliament. But even then the representatives of the counties and boroughs were not legally recognised as a power in the State, and it was not until the reign of Edward the Third that it was declared that no taxes should be levied upon the people of the country unless with the sanction of the barons, archbishops, and bishops—members of the House of Lords; and with the consent of the knights, citizens, and burgesses who formed the House of Commons. That was the law established in Edward the Third's time, and that was really the inception of the system that they now possessed. They had first the king, and then the barons who fought for and won their liberties at Runnymede, and the burgesses, citizens, and knights who won their freedom in the days of Edward the Third. Those few brief sentences told a great history. Since that time the struggle of the English people to maintain these privileges intact had been consistent and persistent. (Applause.) They had met with much opposition, and with much harsh treatment; yet they had resolutely maintained the privileges which their ancestors fought for and secured. The basis of their English liberty was laid upon these great landmarks in their history:—First, the establishment of trial by jury, which had come down from the Saxon times. Next, the great Magna Charta of 1215. Next, the first calling of

an English Parliament in which the commonalty were represented, in the time of Edward III. Then the Bill of Rights, in William the Third's time—the enactment which gave independence to the English citizen, and made him free by law. Next, the *Habeas Corpus* Act; and since that the Libel Bill that was initiated by Charles James Fox; afterwards the great Bill for the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics, and since that the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867. They could trace their liberties step by step from that early period, and they were inheritors of all that their forefathers had struggled for. (Cheers.) It was for them to defend those privileges, and to cherish them not only with regard, but with affection. (More cheers.) They must not suppose that those privileges which had been committed to them had been committed only in trust. (Hear, hear.) They had got them from their ancestors, and it was due to those who succeeded them, not only to hand them down unimpaired, but with interest for the use of them. (Loud cheers.) To adopt a commercial phrase, he might say that the past had drawn a bill upon the present and made it payable to the future. Every citizen in Newcastle was engaged in endeavouring to pay the bill that had been called up for our acceptance, and he hoped in this election, as he had said before, that they would endeavour honestly and conscientiously to discharge that duty. (Loud cheers.) He had no wish to detain them with unnecessary historical statements, but he thought that on the eve of such an important contest, it would be well for them to recollect the circumstances in which they were placed, and realize some slight idea of the privileges they possessed, and of the struggles that had been endured in gaining them. (Applause.) He felt satisfied that in this battle in which they were engaged victory would ultimately be with them. (Renewed cheers.) They might have temporary defeats. There always had been in the history of mankind times when the cause of freedom had received a check, and the cause of progress, like the tide, had sometimes ebbed and sometimes flowed. They had been for the last few years on the full tide of progress and prosperity. Possibly they might be at the present time, he would not say receding, but there was a disposition amongst a section of the community to stand still, and wait a little to allow matters to adjust themselves. He was satisfied, however, that the masses of intelligent Englishmen had resolved that the struggles that had been won should be an incentive to future progress. (Cheers.) The coming battle, he would not say—he did not think it right to make such an exaggerated statement as to

a struggle in which he was personally concerned—he would not say therefore that the eyes of the whole of England were directed to this contest, but this he would say that if they could make a resolute battle on behalf of their principles at this time they would to some extent stem the tide of Conservatism. (Loud applause.) They must rouse to their work as one in which their own personal interests, the interests of their children, the interests of the present day, the interests of succeeding generations, and the interests of their own town and of their own country were bound up and identified. It was a personal, a national, even a sacred duty to discharge honestly and earnestly their political obligations. He would have them

Rouse to this work of high and holy love,
 And you an angel's happiness shall know,
 Shall bless the earth, while in the world above
 The good begun by you shall onward flow
 In many a branching stream and thicker grow.
 The seed that in these few and fleeting hours
 Your hands unvarying and unwearied sow,
 Shall deck your graves with amaranthine flowers,
 And yield you joys divine in Heaven's eternal bowers.

He had a string of questions in his hand which he had not had an opportunity of replying to at the other meetings. One of these was, "If returned to Parliament, will you endeavour to get the county franchise made the same as that of the town?" Of course he should. (Hear, hear.) He had said repeatedly that he could not see any difference between the inhabitants of the counties and those of the boroughs in this matter. Another question was, "Do you advocate the payment of members of Parliament?" He replied yes; he did advocate the payment of members of Parliament. On this subject he might disagree with some of his friends, but the disagreement was more in appearance than in reality. (Hear, hear.) What were the facts? It used to be the custom in this country for every man who went to Parliament to be paid for his services. In the records of their own town of Newcastle they would find that their Parliamentary representatives were in former days regularly paid for their services just in the same way as other men were paid for the discharge of local or public duties. The constituency was called upon to find his remuneration. The money did not come out of the national exchequer, but was paid out of a certain rate levied in the municipality. He forgot the exact sum, but he believed the remuneration allowed to a knight of the shire or a county member was 4s. per day, and

the sum allowed to a member of Parliament representing a borough was 3s. per day. Their expenses were paid at London, or Oxford, or Winchester, or wherever the Parliament met. That sum would be equivalent to 20s. or 25s. per day of our money. The last man who received payment for his services as a member of Parliament was one of the noblest, purest, and best of Englishmen—he meant Andrew Marvell. (Applause.) The members of the American Senate and Congress, of the Spanish Cortes, and of the Italian Parliament were also paid; and he believed it would be found to be wise on the part of Englishmen to remunerate their Parliamentary representatives, not excessively, not unduly, but fairly and honestly, for the work they did. It was infinitely better to pay a man well than to allow him to pay himself. (Hear, hear, and loud laughter.) By this remark he did not mean to impute corrupt or improper motives to our members of Parliament. There was no legislative assembly in the world which, so far as mere monetary considerations were concerned, was more independent, and less liable to the charge of corruption, than our present House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) He did not believe that mercenary motives influenced that body; and he thought he might fairly say that whether a man was a Radical, a Whig, or a Tory, the mere purchase of his services was a thing unknown in modern political life. (Hear, hear.) The last time they ever heard of such a thing as a man being absolutely paid for his services—and it was the most disgraceful chapter in the history of modern England—was when a Tory Government paid members of the Irish Parliament to vote in favour of the Union. (Cheers, and “Shame.”) Since that outrageous and most unblushing offence against the principles of fair government and national integrity, he believed they had never had any reason to impute to members of either the one House or the other the slightest disposition to corruption. (Hear, hear.) He thought it was Sir Robert Walpole who said that every man had his price. Some men were bought by a large sum of money, some were bought by a little piece of riband, and some were bought by a star or other decoration. It was said that a large number of men had been brought over from one side to the other in France by such considerations; but he was disposed to believe that in this country the bestowal of considerations in consequence of political services was guided by as pure a motive, and was directed by as sincere a desire to serve the nation at large, as it would be possible to expect in matters Imperial. (Hear, hear.) As an abstract opinion, he cer-

tainly believed that members of Parliament might fairly be remunerated for their services. (Applause.) The next question was, "Do you advocate the payment of candidates' expenses?" He had said before, and now he could only repeat, that he was in favour of all the fair and legitimate expenses of Parliamentary candidates being paid, either by the municipality or by the nation at large. He thought it most unreasonable—it was contrary to the spirit of the English Constitution, and he was certain that it was contrary to the welfare of the State—to call upon an individual who went to Parliament for the purpose of discharging a public duty, to pay hundreds or thousands of pounds when they wished him to engage in an election. (Cheers.) As they made the municipality or Corporation pay for the expenses of the members of that body, so he thought they ought to make the Imperial exchequer liable for the expenses of a Parliamentary election. (Hear, hear.) He had another question—"Will you vote for the abolition of the income tax?" This was a very wide question, and he did not think that any man who had given the slightest consideration to questions of national taxation would be bold enough to say he would vote for the abolition of the income tax. (Hear, hear.) He held a strong belief that it would be for the nation's interest to have as much direct taxation and as little indirect taxation as possible, and he thought that the principle laid down by Sir Robert Peel, and before him by Mr. Pitt, was a sound one—namely, that in levying the income tax they should get at a man's resources, and having ascertained that, they should make him in some way contribute to the national revenue a sum proportionate to his capabilities. If anyone could devise a scheme better than the income-tax, he should be glad to listen to it and to give it his support. The attention of every competent statesman and financier had been directed to this question for years past, and they had settled that, although the income-tax had many and grave objections, it was impossible to see how they could be entirely removed. (Hear, hear.) He had, however, a strong objection to Schedule D of the income-tax—to the manner in which Government representatives came down upon the man engaged in a business that might this year make large profits and the next year incur a considerable loss, and compel him to go and explain all his commercial affairs to a number of individuals who may not be either reticent or considerate with him, and who, having obtained that information, may, perhaps unconsciously, convey it to people outside. It was an uncomfortable thing for a

man in business to submit to an inquisitorial examination of this kind ; and if they could devise some means by which that could be to some extent avoided, it would be very desirable. He would maintain intact the taxation of men who had a settled revenue from land or a fixed income ; but he would make some concession to men who had incomes varied and irregular in consequence of the fluctuations of trade. To ask for the abolition of the income-tax was, however, a proposal that could scarcely be taken into consideration. He objected to all taxation—(a laugh)—but as they must have a certain sum of money for national purposes, they should levy it the best possible way. He thought that direct taxation was better than indirect ; and inasmuch as the income tax was of that character, he should be disposed to support its principle, while he would moderate its operation as far as possible according to circumstances, and make it as easy in its application as was practicable. (Applause.) Some one asked “Will Mr. Cowen use his utmost endeavours to ascertain the cause of the extremely high death rate of Newcastle, and how to cure it.” (Laughter, and hear, hear.) He was afraid that this was a difficult task. Some of their friends had been engaged in the investigation of the high death-rate of Newcastle for a number of weeks, and none more actively so than his friends Mr. Cook, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Temple—(hear, hear)—and he would say this to the credit—it was little they got said to their credit—of the Town Council of Newcastle, that he believed the question had received their best attention, and that it was quite incorrect to say they had not been examining into the high death-rate of the town. (Hear, hear.) They might not have seen any palpable results as yet, but the Council had been inquiring into the matter, and he hoped the inquiry would lead to action. His opinion was that the high death-rate was caused by various circumstances. Probably they might not have very good water—(hear, hear)—although he did not believe there was much in that. Or they might not have as good drainage as they should have, or there might be something wrong with both gas, water, and drainage, and all these might be causes of complaint ; but he believed that their high death-rate—although it was merely an opinion—arose greatly from the large amount of overcrowding in the town. They had a large population huddled together in a comparatively small space, and he thought the man would be a wise man, and certainly a patriotic and benevolent man, who could devise any system by which this gathering together of large masses of the community might be to some

extent obviated. (Hear, hear.) If they could devise some scheme by which the railway would convey people a moderate distance outside the town, within easy access—taking them away in the morning, and bringing them back at night—at a small measure of expense, it would be a great advantage, and contribute to the health of the population, immensely improve their moral tone, and indeed, generally sweeten the breath of their society. (Hear, hear.) A gentleman had again asked him whether he would vote for the purchase of railways by the State. He believed he had already replied to that question, but he would simply say that it was a matter of detail and scarcely one for close investigation in a meeting of that sort. He assented, however, to the general principle that it would be well for the Government to take these things into its hands. Government did not always do its work well—indeed, it sometimes did it very badly—but he would say this, that there was no public work in this country, possibly not in all Europe, better or more economically managed than their Post-office. (Hear, hear.) And if they could have the same capacity, and the same public spirit thrown into the management of the railway system, the result might be that they would get a better mode of communication, that the nation would be benefited, and that the parties directly interested would not be injured. (Hear, hear.) Another question put was, “Would Mr. Cowen vote for compensation to the freemen of Newcastle provided their property was taken from them?” That question he had answered before. He believed that if any man having a vested interest in this country was deprived of that interest for the benefit of the community, the community ought to pay for it. This was a broad rule which they allowed to apply to all dealings of a national character, and he did not know why they should except the freemen of Newcastle from the operation of the rule. (Cheers.) For his own part he believed that the Moor—the large property held by the freemen—morally belonged to the entire inhabitants of the town. It was given to the freemen because at that time the freemen included every man that lived in the town. That was the name by which burgesses were then known. Now, they were aware that when Newcastle was a walled town, no man was allowed to carry on a trade unless he was a freeman: that qualification was necessary to permit him to carry on business. But, although that was then the law of the land, it had long since disappeared. Any man could now conduct a trade, and every man who lived in town was called upon to discharge the

duties of an ordinary citizen, and ought to be protected in his rights and privileges. The freemen, however, had by law the possession of this property, and he thought if they were dispossessed of it, as a mere matter of legal precedent, they ought to be compensated for that which was to be the advantage of the community. (Hear, hear.) This was simply in accordance with the rule they had observed in matters of an analogous character, and he would support the rule in the case of the freemen. (Applause.) Mr Cowen then observed that the next question was of a slightly offensive character. He did not think he was called upon to answer it, nevertheless, he would do so. (Applause.) He was asked if he was a Christian. (Shame, and hisses.) He professed to be a Christian—that was as much as a man could do. (Cheers.) Whether he was a Christian or not must be shown by his life, by his intercourse with the world, and by his dealings with his fellows. (Applause.) By that standard, and in that way he was willing to be tested and judged by his neighbours. (Loud cheers.) He did to go to street corners and make loud profession of his convictions. A sincere man had too deep a sensibility for such needless and ostentatious exhibitions. A man who had thought deeply on these questions felt too keenly for exhibition of this outward semblance of his profession. It was sufficient for him to say that he had always striven to model his humble life by the guiding principles that had been taught us by Christianity. (Cheers.) He knew not, nor had he heard of any higher teaching than that involved in the hope that it was common to every Christian—(applause)—and it was that which animated his breast and guided his conduct. (Renewed applause.) He was aware that their political opponents were moved by personal rancour and political animosity, and had endeavoured to scatter broadcast throughout the town, in anonymous letters and circulars, imputations against his deep convictions. (Shame.) He hoped that the independent electors of Newcastle would at least protest against such an attempt to stab a man in the dark by circulating distilled poison, in that and other ways, without giving him an opportunity of reply. (Cheers.) If those anonymous slanderers and moral scavengers were present he would charge them to their teeth with cowardice and with meanness.

“ Their names, their human names, shall hang on high,
Exalted 'midst their less abhorr'd compeers,
To fester through the infamy of years.”

SPEECH IX.

[*School Room, Bath Lane, January 6th.*]

Mr. COWEN said that there was one point in the address of the Conservative candidate which he had not noticed previously. Mr. Hamond had devoted a considerable portion of his time to a comment on the disturbed political condition of France and Spain. Now, he could scarcely see the pertinence of those observations to the subject under discussion. (Hear, hear.) He did not exactly understand how the disturbed state of those countries had any very direct bearing upon the contest now waging in Newcastle. ("No," and applause.) It seemed to him very much as if their opponents were anxious to throw out a sort of red flag to frighten some good friends, who happened to be timid politicians, from the course they might otherwise have pursued. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Everybody knew that an enraged wild animal was affected by seeing a piece of red calico flaunted in its face—(laughter)—and his opponents seemed to have an idea that there was a certain section of the good people of Newcastle who would be similarly affected if this republican flag could only be kept constantly dangling before their eyes. (Applause.) It was a very old dodge, however, and had been practised many scores of times in past ages. It was a very common device resorted to by the ruler in France to whom Mr. Hamond had referred in such eulogistic terms. Whenever that ruler desired to have any special enactment to increase his power, or to enhance his authority, he had always told people of the danger there was to order, and the fear there was for property, in that most Conservative country in the world. He thought that their friends, the Tories, had taken a leaf from that book, and were attempting—he did not think they would be successful, however—to impose upon the good people of Newcastle this useless and

unnecessary argument. No, it was not an argument, it was a sort of intimidation. (Hear, hear, and applause.) But, now, as it had come to a question of historical exactitude, their friends the Tories ought to recollect that, while they talked of the disturbed condition of France and Spain, those two countries were just undergoing the process, or going through the temporary state of disturbance, that this country went through some years ago. (Applause.) He hoped Mr. Hamond would not forget that a civil war in England was waged for nearly half a century. He hoped that gentleman would not forget this fact—that it was only 130 years since the Pretender held high court in Holyrood Palace, or since the people of Newcastle were summoned to the walls to protect themselves against the advance of the adherents of the House of Stuart. (Applause.) When they talked of the disturbed condition of France, it would be well to recollect that our own country had gone through similar tribulation and sorrow. (Applause.) He remembered reading not long ago an anecdote of Richard Cromwell, the son of the great Protector—a man who declined becoming his father's successor. He had occasion to go to France, and travelling *incognito*, not wishing to be known, he came upon a quiet French village, where he could not find an ordinary hostelry at his disposal; but a neighbouring French nobleman, hearing of that distinguished Englishman's arrival, offered him the hospitalities of his house. Richard Cromwell accepted them, and after the evening's repast was over, they began to talk of the state of France and the state of England; and this was what the good French nobleman said:—"The English are a very worthy people; they are most industrious, they are very brave; altogether they are a most exemplary people in many respects, but they are such an unsettled nation, that they are constantly disturbing the Governmental arrangements in their land. They have already killed one king, and they are not satisfied without another. They had a Republic and they upset it, and now they are discussing upon some future arrangements between a Monarchy and Republicanism." (Laughter and applause.) That was the view of a steady, sensible, and intelligent French aristocrat at the period to which he referred. Then it was England that was in a disturbed and unsettled political condition, and France had a Government, if not Liberal, one which at least was stable, and gave satisfaction to the inhabitants. Now the case was reversed! We had got through our troubles; we had passed that period of unsettledness, and landed ourselves in steady and comfortable times

—(applause)—while our French neighbours and our Spanish neighbours were suffering from the same serious difficulties as those from which we had suffered. (Applause.) He thought, therefore, that men who talked in a flippant manner of the unsettled condition of States across the Channel should recollect the career of this country, and the course that our public men and statesmen had pursued. (Applause.) He repeated that this attempt to raise an issue in Newcastle on the question of Republicanism was altogether beside the mark, inasmuch as he had repeatedly said that Republicanism could not be, was not, and in all probability would not be, in this or the next generation, a question of practical politics in England. (Applause.) It was simply a political speculation, and it would be as unreasonable to judge a man, or to estimate a man's fitness for the discharge of legislative duties from his opinions on the abstract question of a form of Government, as it would be to form their estimate of him from his scientific or literary investigations. (Hear, hear.) He had been astonished, he must confess, singularly astonished to find so great a number of people repeating this very foolish cry of Republicanism! It was so utterly unreal! He did not know why it was. He had been talking in Newcastle and up and down Tyneside for the last twenty years, and he had in that time addressed not scores but hundreds of public meetings; he had been engaged in various public works; he had been a member of different public bodies—Boards of Guardians, a very steady and sober organisation—(laughter)—Town Councils, and other bodies, and he had come in contact, he supposed, with hundreds of his neighbours in commercial affairs, and he repeated that he was astonished that everybody, having seen him in these various capacities, should form such an extraordinarily exaggerated estimate of his character as his friends the Tories would have them to believe to be correct. (Laughter, and applause.) He was sure that most of his friends would bear him out in this,—that, if he had been staunch to principle, and had resolutely adhered to the doctrines he had preached, he had never been an unreasonable or exacting neighbour, and had never been so absurd or so tenacious of his opinions as to be untractable in matters of detail. (Hear, hear.) Now, this was the distinguishing characteristic between the Englishman and the Frenchman. The Frenchman and the Spaniard insisted on strict logical sequence in all their Governmental institutions; but an Englishman looked at the practical issues of a question, and, furthermore, he was always willing and wishful

when he came to practical questions, to deal with details as the circumstances would allow, and as the opinions of the majority of the inhabitants inclined. If their neighbours the French had acquiesced in the proposal of M. Thiers and his colleagues, and had consented to give and take a little here and a little there, or, to put it broadly, if they had acquiesced in some compromise on the question of Government, he was satisfied that their institutions would have been more stable, their present position more prosperous, and their future more hopeful. (Cheers.) Englishmen had adopted that policy, and had pursued that course of action, and this was one of the reasons of the stability of our institutions. (Applause.) The English Tories, on the other hand—and he would say this to their credit—whenever they had fought stoutly against a change, whenever they had resisted to the utmost any reform, had eventually been wise enough in their generation, and had acquiesced in the reform when the change had been effected. (Applause.) They had always acceded to the decisions of their countrymen when these decisions had assumed the force of law. (Hear, hear.) He thought that their friends across the Channel had been seeking for logical sequence in their institutions, while the English had been seeking a reasonable compromise between logical exactness and practical utility. (Applause.) He repeated that, in his humble way, he had endeavoured to carry out the ordinary views and feelings of an Englishman in these matters. (Hear, hear.) But the exaggeration that had taken place with regard to himself he saw was pretty prevalent. Now that he had referred to this point, they would permit him for a few minutes to make one or two observations in the same direction. Their friends had raised a sort of hobgoblin estimate of his candidature and himself. (Laughter and applause.) In his proceedings in public life he had always acted upon this policy, that whenever a man made any distinct accusation against him, he never replied to him. What was he to Hecuba, or Hecuba to him? (Hear, hear.) It was sufficient that he was satisfied in his conscience that he was right. (Cheers.) It was sufficient that he received the approval of that inward monitor, and having received that, other matters were of small consequence. (Renewed cheers.) He repeated that he had never replied, whatever had been the statements, and however grossly exaggerated or untrue they were. (Applause.) He did not think, for the five-and-twenty years or more that he had been engaged in public labours, that he had deviated one hair's-breadth from that path, neither in justification of his conduct nor in defence of

his course of public action. (Applause.) He had to some extent suffered in consequence ; for this reason, because—as he had now come to personal matters, he should go right to the core of them—he happened to be the proprietor of a newspaper. (Laughter and applause.) This might be a misfortune, or it might be good fortune, he could not tell which—(laughter)—but a newspaper necessarily had rivals. (Hear, hear, and applause.) And these rivals, of course, held different political opinions to what he did. They held them as conscientiously as he did himself and the gentlemen connected with his newspaper, and they enforced them, he would admit, with ability. (Hear, hear.) He had no wish to disparage their capacity ; but could they understand that in addition to the ordinary political hostility to himself and the newspaper that he represented, there was a certain measure of trade jealousy ? (Laughter and applause.) Could they understand that there was a certain rivalry between contending establishments ? (Laughter.) If they did not, he thought they could very easily bring their minds to conceive that between two establishments in the same line of business there was a certain measure of hostility. If they looked back over the pages of the local newspapers for the last 10 or 15 years, they would scarcely find a bad motive that could animate a human being that had not at one time or another been attributed to the individual before them. There was scarcely an unworthy imputation that was possible for one man to utter against his neighbour that had not been uttered against himself in the local press, (“Shame.”) He had never replied. (Applause.) He had acted upon this policy, that if he could say a civil thing for his neighbour he would do so, but that if he could not he would be silent. (Cheers.) This was indifference, he might almost say contempt, because he pleaded guilty to the fact that he was too proud to stoop to such needless contention. (Great cheering.) A man made an accusation against him in which the public were not interested ; if he replied that reply provoked irritation ; irritation meant bad feeling ; and this personal contention, in which no principle was concerned, and in which no interest was at stake, spread and widened for no purpose. Therefore he had always, he would repeat, practised the policy of silence ; he had let his opponent alone severely. (Loud laughter and applause.) In the hundreds of meetings he had addressed, he had never referred to this subject ; nor had he mentioned it in the daily press at his disposal ; nor again would he have alluded to it on this occasion but for this reason. The personal opinion of the gentleman to whom

he referred was, so far as he was concerned, a matter of utter indifference ; but when they sought to damage his personal character, or to misrepresent his opinions, and through that to injure the cause he espoused, then it became a public question. (Applause and cheers.) For better or for worse, wisely or unwisely, the fact was, that on this occasion he was the representative of the Liberal cause in Newcastle, and his opponents, from a narrow spirit and with narrower intellects, were attempting to influence matters in the way he had described. (Cheers.) But he knew the people of Tyneside well ; he had met them too often, both when he had differed from them and when he had agreed with them, not to know that they never would permanently allow this needless libelling to be of service ; and he was sure that when the battle really came to the polling booth or to the ballot box, the people would not allow any mere personal animus that might be raised against him, because he happened to be in trade hostility with half a dozen persons in the town—to seriously affect their voting. (Applause.) He had received within the last few days about a dozen letters ; one of which he would read to them. He would have read the others, but to tell the truth, some of them were excessively complimentary. (Laughter and applause.) The letter he was about to read was private, and he should not give the writer's name :—

Newcastle, Jan. 5, 1874.

DEAR SIR,—When you were nominated for the seat rendered vacant by the death of your respected father, my mind was made up that you would have none of my support, as I have all along been led to believe you were some Radical monster not fit to be trusted. After reading your clear and philosophical expositions of your own political creed, I am convinced I should not be doing my duty to my country and to the town of Newcastle were I to support anyone else. I must apologise for burning your circular ; but I hope you will be satisfied with this poor mark of respect that I can favour you with.—I am, dear sir, yours respectfully, &c.

That was a specimen of a number of communications that had recently reached him ; and that was his apology, because he owed them an apology for detaining the audience even for five minutes on a mere question of personal consideration. (Applause). It was, however, desirable that in a contest of this kind the Liberal party should be able to stand up reasonably on behalf of their candidate. (Hear, hear.) There were none of us perfect ; we had all our sins and our shortcomings ; every household amongst them had a skeleton in some closet, and, God knew, he had never set up to be better than his neighbours. He had never undertaken

to be the needless censurer of other men's conduct. He had studied his own acts, and he hoped he was always sufficiently liberal of interpreting the motives and conduct of those with whom he came in contact. He would say, taking it as a whole, that he had led a fair and upright life as an ordinary citizen of Newcastle, but they might reasonably expect, that being an active politician, he must necessarily have trod upon the corns or the toes of some of their oponent's prejudices, and that he had uttered opinions that must have been hostile to a large number of his neighbours ; yet, at the same time, he trusted that when he uttered those opinions, it was conscientiously, and with earnestness, and with a respect for the opinions of others. (Applause.) He left this personal matter where it was. He had made the statement that he had made because he believed their opponents were trying to throw unjust odium upon their cause, by throwing this needless dirt upon the individual addressing them. The speaker then proceeded to touch upon the department of practical politics connected with the colonies of this country, our foreign relations, and our action with India. So far as this country was concerned, there had never been more proofs of progress and more evidences of Liberal and wise legislation than on the three subjects to which he referred. (Hear, hear.) Anterior to the Reform Bill of 1832, when the Tories were in power, very different views had been held on these subjects. It had been a cardinal point in the Tory creed that they ought to maintain in Europe what was called the balance of power; and 80 or 90 years ago we had to go to war with France to force upon the French people a monarch that was hateful to them. We spent millions of money, and wasted immense material treasure ; we shed the blood of the best sons of England on the plains of Europe in profusion, and after twenty years we succeeded in putting the Bourbons on the throne of France. That had succeeded for a time ; but in less than thirty years after the nephew of the very man whom we had spent so much treasure to destroy, came to the same throne, and was received as the ally of this country. (Cheers.) Then, as regarded our colonies, the Tories had pursued the same course of action. Our English Government had gone to war for the purpose of maintaining their authority over the American colonies, and had refused to allow them a voice in the question of their taxation. The American rebellion was successful, and he put it to any dispassionate Englishman, whether the American colonies, as an independent State, were not of infinitely greater service to Europe, England, and the world than they would

have been as a mere appanage to this empire ? (Applause.) He repeated that it had been the policy of their Tory opponents to interfere in all foreign squabbles ; but now a better and a wiser course was being taken by the leading statesmen. They were now becoming impressed with the fact that they had nothing to do with the internal affairs of any nation, but had enough to do to manage their own internal concerns. He trusted that in future the balance of this nation would be thrown in favour of freedom and of commercial progress. After pointing out the practical effect that the policy of Liberal statesmen and Liberal politicians had had upon the proceedings of this country with respect to the colonies, and showing how they had ultimately come to possess even a larger share of political freedom than was possessed by the inhabitants of the mother country, the speaker went on to say that these independent colonies managed their own affairs, and that we had now studded all over the world a large number of free commonwealths where the English language was the language of the people, and where he believed English principles would take root and germinate, until they would have immense moral influence through the Anglo-Saxon race spread over the entire globe. (Applause.) There were a large number of our small dependencies which were at the present time of little service to the mother country. The Falkland Islands, for example, were simply an unnecessary source of expenditure to Great Britain. (Hear, hear.) They were kept to a great extent for the purpose of finding salaries and places for a large number of men who could not otherwise be employed in the military or naval occupation. (Laughter and applause.) Now he saw no wisdom in such a course of action. He believed when a colony could maintain itself, could minister to its own wants, and could feel strong enough to go upon an independent course, that it was not to the interest of this country to saddle the ratepayers with needless taxes simply for the purpose of keeping ornamental governors to discharge unnecessary duties. (Hear, hear.) Our expenditure on this head was large—to some extent, probably, it was unavoidable—but still he thought it might be curtailed with advantage. (Applause.) All Englishmen could, of course, be fairly proud that the rule of our sovereign was so world-wide, so beneficent, and so generous ; but while he said this, he could not help thinking that the plan of free and independent states would be no disparagement to this nation, and it might give an impetus to social, political, and moral progress. (Applause.) Referring to India, the speaker remarked that the policy of England toward that vast country had,

in its earlier stages, been a blot upon the national escutcheon. He trusted, however, that the remembrance of those scenes would now be wiped away, and that she would have a prosperous career under the more beneficent rule which now existed. Only a short time ago it was badly managed by a few Tory merchants ; but under the teaching of such Radical politicians as Mr. John Bright and Mr. J. F. B. Blackett, the rule was eventually transfered from the exclusive power of a Tory Company to the entire control of the British Government, and it was now one of the most valuable of our possessions. (Applause.) These and other changes had been won by the consistent exertions of Liberal politicians, and what had thus been done in the past was an indication of what was likely to be carried out in the future. (Loud applause.) The Tories were not now as jubilant, or arrogant, or exacting as they used to be. They still had the same wish to bite, but their teeth were drawn—(laughter and applause)—the same disposition to strike, but their arm was paralysed by the public feeling of the country. He maintained, therefore, that although circumstances had compelled them to change, the same feeling and the same spirit which had animated the leaders of the Tory party in the past, were prevalent amongst them now. (Hear, hear.) They were the same party ; the only difference was that the powerful Liberal sentiment of the country prevented the gratification of their desires. (Loud applause.)

To a question as to whether he would support the Volunteer Act in all its principles, so that the various corps might have a fair amount of income with which to support and clothe their members, Mr. Cowen replied that the question was perfectly in order, and he was willing and anxious to answer it. (Applause.) At the present time, he believed, the volunteers got a certain amount of money as a capitation grant, but his friend, no doubt, thought they did not receive what was sufficient to enable them to carry on the movement with satisfaction. (Hear, hear.) Now, he must own this : that he thought as an individual, that the very best form of military defence which could be had in this country would be a volunteer force. (Hear, hear.) He wished we had no soldiers at a'l, and would be very glad to dispense with both the military and naval armaments ; but he supposed, as long as men had base passions, and had that desire for mastery which animated human beings at the present time, it would be necessary to provide against this inclination for superiority for some period longer. Still, if we had to have a military force at all, he would

model it after the military force of the state of Switzerland, rather than after the states of Prussia and France. In France, Prussia, and other Continental states, a man was compelled to go into the army, and to do a certain amount of military service. This, he thought, was a most unwise teaching of the people, as it took them away in the best part of their lives from business and home, and because their lives in camps often changed to a very considerable extent the whole course of their after lives. (Hear.) He thought the system of Switzerland was much better, and, therefore, as that was the plan which had in some way been copied by our own volunteers, he was of opinion that the force was one to be encouraged rather than held lightly. (Loud applause.) He would much rather see the whole of our people reasonably encouraged to volunteer military service, than that we should perpetuate and strengthen our standing armies. (Loud cheers.) Armies had always been the foes of liberty, and detrimental to the progress of humanity, and, therefore, so far as he was personally concerned, his voice, and influence, and assistance should go to curtail these permanent forces of the country, and to give every reasonable assistance to the volunteers. (Loud applause.)



SPEECH X.

[*Jubilee School, New Road.*]

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY—THE ROMAN CATHOLICS—THE NONCONFORMISTS—THE
JEWS.

MR. COWEN said he had great pleasure in meeting the residents of that part of the borough in order that he might discuss with them the general principles at issue in the contest. He should be glad if, during the short time they were together, they could impart to each other some little amount of political information. (Hear, hear.) He had a very strong notion that an election, properly conducted, was an excellent means of carrying on a system of popular education; and, as far as he could do it, this contest should be turned to that purpose.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

His opponent, Mr. Hamond, had made a statement in the New Town Hall a few nights ago to the effect that he, and the party with whom he was identified, were the advocates of religious liberty—(a laugh)—and that he (Mr. Cowen), and the party with whom he had always acted, were the opponents of that principle. Now, it required a considerable amount of moral hardihood to make a statement like that. (Hear, hear.) He did not know that he had read history correctly; but, if he had, it told him that, as far as the Tories were concerned, they had in all times been the apologists of religious persecution, and the advocates of religious exclusiveness. (Cheers.) So far as the Liberal party—and the Radical wing of the Liberal party especially—were concerned, they had been the advocates of the fullest religious freedom.

(Renewed cheering.) No one marking the history of the great political struggles of this country could fail to be struck with the correctness of the statement he had just uttered ; but still they need not take that declaration entirely upon his own *ipse dixit*. Let them turn to the law and to the testimony—(hear, hear)—and he would make bold to say, in the few remarks he should address to them, that he would demonstrate that—so far as the large religious bodies outside the Established Church were concerned—the course of the Tories in England, and in the whole of this United Kingdom, had been one hostile to their freedom and progress. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) We had four distinctly marked communities apart from the Episcopalian Church ; but in speaking of the Episcopalian Church, and of the members of that body, they would perhaps allow him to say that he did not in any way condemn the members of that communion, or class them as Tories. (Hear, hear.) There were some of the most advanced Liberals, some of the most pronounced advocates of Radical thought, to be found amongst the members of the Established Church, and therefore, he wished it to be understood that it was not the Church—not the Episcopalians as a religious body, but it was the Tory members of that religious organisation that he now specially condemned. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He had said there were four bodies, roughly enumerated, which lay outside of that communion. First, the Roman Catholics ; next, the ordinary English Nonconformists ; third, the Quakers ; and fourth, the Jews. Now, what had been the conduct of the Tory party, in all time past, towards those four distinct religious bodies ?

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

Take the history of their procedure so far as the Roman Catholics were concerned. (Hear, hear.) The Roman Catholics were a numerous and powerful body in this country, but a much more numerous and powerful body in Ireland. There, they constituted, he thought, something like seven-eighths of the population. In this land they were not so numerous, although they formed a very influential section of the community ; and yet he was simply stating an historical fact when he declared that there were under the Tory *regime*—when the Tories were the rulers of this country, and the directors of the political machinery which existed in this land—there were something like 70 enactments against the civil rights and the political freedom of Roman Catholics. (“Shame,” hear, hear, and applause.) Some of those enactments were most outr-

geously unjust. Some of them were positively cruel. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Others, again, were of the most annoying character, from their very frivolity. (Cheers.) He would not, however, ask them to accept his general declaration; but, with their permission, he would read, in a broadly stated way, a description of the enactments to which he had referred as affecting the Roman Catholics. He would repeat, in order that they might understand the question before them, that for forty years or more, the Liberals had practically ruled the destinies of this empire. Previous to that forty years, and for more than double that period, the Tories ruled. Since the Liberals had come into office, the penalties to which he was now going to call attention had, one by one, been repealed; but they had been repealed against the combined and energetic resistance of the Tory party. (Hear, hear, and applause.) If they would listen for a moment he would make a brief explanation. Some of the penal enactments he was about to read would no doubt be painful for conscientious Roman Catholics to listen to. The enactments themselves were not only highly censurable as mere penal laws, but they were couched in language which must offend the sensibilities of all sincere members of the Roman Catholic Church. He had always held that no man, whatever his opinions, had a right needlessly to offend even the prejudices of his neighbours. (Hear, hear.) And more especially he had no right to offend the religious susceptibilities of men with whom circumstances had thrown him in contact. (Renewed cheers.) The enactments of our Tory legislators—the work of the leaders of that party with which his honourable opponent was connected—were couched in language calculated to give great offence to the members of the Catholic community. (Hear, hear.) They were described in them as Papists. Now, every man knew that, in former years, the term Papist was a term of reproach to our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen; and yet for that simple reason it was incorporated into the Acts of Parliament. (“Shame,” and applause.) He hoped, therefore, that when he pronounced the word “Papist,” his friends would understand that he did not himself use the word; but that he was merely reading an enactment which gained the force of law by the influence and power of our Tory legislators. (Hear, hear, and applause.) First then:—

No Catholic priest[†] was allowed to celebrate marriage. “If any Popish priest celebrate matrimony between any two persons, knowing that both or either is of the Protestant religion, he shall

be liable to transportation, and if he returns he shall be considered guilty of high treason, punishable by death." No Catholic Peer was allowed to become a member of the House of Lords or Catholic commoner to enter the House of Commons. "No peer of the realm shall sit in the House of Peers, nor person chosen as a member of the House of Commons shall sit as such unless he first takes the oath of allegiance and supremacy and subscribes to a declaration against the doctrines of the Popish Church, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the idolatry of the Church of Rome, invocation of the Virgin Mary and all the Saints." Any Peer or member of the House of Commons guilty of an infraction of this law was punishable with transportation. No Catholic was allowed to vote at an election for a member of Parliament under heavy penalties and years of transportation. No Catholic was allowed to serve as a mayor, sovereign, boroughreeve, burgomaster, bailiff, alderman, recorder, treasurer, sheriff, town-clerk, common-councilman, master or warden of any guild, corporation, or fraternity in any city, walled town, or corporation in Ireland. "All persons holding offices, civil and military, and receiving pay, salary, fee, or wages, to take the oaths of supremacy and abjuration, and to subscribe to the declaration against transubstantiation, the mass, &c., under heavy penalties and long imprisonment." All Catholics were excluded from parish vestries and township-meetings by Act for preventing Papists having it in their power to obstruct the building or repairing of churches by out-voting the Protestant parishioners. All Catholics were forbidden to possess arms by an Act for disarming the Papists, requiring them to deliver up to the justices or civil officers all their armour, arms, and ammunition, &c., and authorising search, &c., by day or night. Makers of firearms were forbidden to engage Catholic apprentices, and no Catholic was to be employed as fowler or game-keeper for any Protestant, under penalty and fine and one year's imprisonment for first offence. For the second, all the pains and penalties attaching to persons guilty of high treason. No Catholics were allowed to serve as grand jurors, unless a sufficient number of Protestants could not be found, and issues to determine questions arising upon Popery laws were to be tried by known Protestants only. No Catholic was to serve on juries in actions between Protestant and Catholic. All Catholics (in England) were prohibited from practising physic, or exercising the trade of apothecaries. [He supposed that was for fear of poisoning Protestants.] (Laughter.) All Catholics were disabled from taking leases for a longer term

than 31 years, or at rents less than two-thirds of the improved yearly value. No Catholic could dispose of his estate by will, or lend money upon the security of land. No Catholic was allowed to take leases for a term of 999 years, or to take or to transfer lands by devise, descent, purchase, or otherwise. All Catholics were prohibited from the keeping of any horse of a value exceeding £5. "Any child of a Catholic [they would mark the iniquity of this enactment] conforming to the established religion, may force his parent to surrender his estate, under a fair allowance." [This was a direct bribe to the children to induce them to change their religion.] The eldest son of a Catholic might reduce his fee-simple estate to a life lease, and a younger brother might deprive the elder of the legal right of primogeniture. All Catholics were prohibited from keeping schools, or procuring the education of their children at school, also prohibited from sending them beyond seas for education. No Catholics were permitted to keep schools and teach children. [Yet, after having done that, their opponents had the impudence to accuse their Catholic fellow citizens of being ignorant!] No Catholics were allowed to be guardians, or to have the custody or tuition of any orphan or child under the age of 21 years. A Catholic might dispose of the custody of his child or children, by will, during minority, to any person other than a Catholic ecclesiastic. To show their dislike to Catholics, all working men were compelled to labour on Catholic holidays, or for each offence 2s. fine on labourers: or in default the punishment of whipping. [This showed the dislike of the ruling authorities to the Catholic body, and their disposition to inflict upon them as much annoyance as they possibly could. An English labourer was compelled to work on a Catholic saint day; if he did not, he was fined a certain sum of money, and if he was unable to pay the money, he was publicly whipped.] Catholics were punished for burying the dead except in Protestant churchyards, or being present at the burying any dead other than therein. All who attended or were present at any pilgrimage or meeting held at any holy well, or reputed holy well, were fined 10s., or in default, were whipped. Magistrates were ordered to demolish all crosses, pictures, and inscriptions publicly set up to promote the piety of Catholics. All officers and soldiers had diligently to frequent divine service and sermon, in the places appointed for the assemblage of the regiment, troop, or company to which they might belong, and no exceptions were made in favour of Catholic officers or soldiers. [No provision was made for the celebration of the Catholic religion.] If a Catholic became

possessed of any right of presentation to a benefice, the same became *ipso facto* vested in the Crown, if he did not abjure his religion. Statutes were passed interdicting donations and bequests for superstitious uses ; such as towards the maintenance of a priest or chaplain to say mass, to pray for the souls of the dead, or to maintain perpetual obits, lamps, &c., to be used at prayers for dead persons. Such were to be vested in the king, and applied to Protestant institutions. For obtaining from the Bishop of Rome any manner of bull, writing, or instrument, written or printed, containing any thing or matter ; or publishing or putting in use any such instrument, the procurers, abettors, and counsellors were to be adjudged guilty of high treason. Any child who (with the consent of its parents) should be found begging, the parson and wardens of the parish should detain, and they should bind such child to a Protestant master until the age of 21, or to a Protestant tradesmen until the age of 24 years.

There were various enactments of a similar kind to throw ridicule upon our Catholic fellow-countrymen, to impose pains and penalties upon them, and to deprive them of all civil and religious liberty.

These were the laws of the country up to the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act. Mr. Curran, the celebrated Irish orator, in describing these laws, said, " They are destructive of Irish arts, of industry, of private morals and public order. They are fitted to extirpate even the Christian religion from amongst the people, and reduce them to the condition of savages and rebels, disgraceful to humanity and dangerous to the State." (Applause.) Now, he had read—hurriedly he must admit—what he thought was quite sufficient to convey to them the state of the law, so far as our Catholic fellow-countrymen were concerned, under the Tory rule. (" Shame," and applause.) The Tories conceived those laws, put them in force, and maintained them with the full force of their power and authority as long as they were able. When they were unable to maintain them longer ; when the fear of insurrection in Ireland, together with the moral sentiments of the Radicals in this country, became too strong, then they repealed those hateful laws,—(loud cheers,)—but it was not until then. (Hear, hear, hisses, and loud applause.) He wished to call the attention of the audience to the singular breach of faith committed by the Tory rulers of this country at the time, or at some period earlier than the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, with respect to those Catholic penalties. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Pitt was anxious to effect a Union between this country and Ireland, and he caused an intimation to be made to the members of the Irish Parliament that if they would consent to the Union between England and Ireland, those hateful and outrageous enactments against the Catholics should be removed. The Irish people were not willing, even on those terms, to submit to a Union such as now existed, but Mr. Pitt and the Tory members of his administration at that time sent large sums of money to Ireland, which Lord Cornwallis and others distributed amongst the corrupt members of the Irish Parliament. The votes of those members were openly bought in Dublin at the time; and not only the money but certain social distinctions were conferred upon the men who came over from the side opposed to the Union. They had been often reminded lately of the corruption of the political leaders in the United States; and many moral lessons had been preached by the Tory party upon this stigma on the Liberal institutions of America. He for one joined most heartily in that condemnation. But they should recollect that the greatest blot on the history of this country for the last five hundred years was the open and unblushing purchase of the members of the Irish House of Commons. (Applause.) A bargain was struck. Mr. Pitt and the Tories agreed to amend the law so far as the Catholics were concerned, providing a majority of the Irish House of Commons would consent to the Union. Through the instrumentality of English gold, the vote was obtained; the majority deciding in favour of the Union. And let them mark the result. The Tories, having accomplished their object, broke the bargain. They secured the Union, but refused to repeal the obnoxious enactments against the Roman Catholics; and for more than thirty years afterwards those enactments were in full force. It was not till the matchless eloquence of Daniel O'Connell and his colleagues shook the empire to its centre that they were compelled to concede the privileges and rights they enjoyed. That was the course of conduct, so far as their Tory friends were concerned, with regard to the Catholics. But notwithstanding the repeal of those legal penalties against Roman Catholics, it had been only within a more recent period—within the life-time indeed of most present—that the Catholics had received full and complete political recognition of their rights as citizens. Daniel O'Connell was the first Catholic member of the House of Commons; but it remained for the Liberal Government of Lord Palmerston to appoint the first Roman Catholic judge. There had been most competent Roman Catholic lawyers in this country—men distin-

guished for their eloquence and ability; but the simple fact that they belonged to that religious body had been a barrier to their legal advancement. The last Liberal Government broke through the practice by making Mr. Serjeant Shee the first Roman Catholic judge in this country. Mr. Gladstone's Government had done something better still. They broke through this rule in Ireland, and made Thomas O'Hagan, the friend and colleague of O'Connell in his agitation in connection with the Repeal Association, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. (Cheers.) And they owed it to the same Government that they had removed from Ireland the last badge of religious servitude and oppression in the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church in that country. When Mr. Hamond told them that the Tories were the advocates of religious liberty, and that the Liberals and Nonconformists were the advocates of the opposite doctrine, he appealed to the testimony that he had just now produced. He made no unsupported declaration. He made no mere hyperbolical assertion, but appealed to the facts as recorded in history. Any man in Newcastle was as much able to test these as he was; and he maintained that the statements of his opponent, so far as the Catholics were concerned, were directly contrary to the facts. The declaration which he began with was correct, that the Tories as a body had always been the advocates of religious exclusion and religious intolerance.

THE NONCONFORMISTS.

With respect to the Nonconformists—the conduct of the Tories towards them was not less censurable. The laws against the Nonconformists certainly did not press with so much severity, and they were not enforced with the same disposition to inflict mental and moral indignity upon them. But still they were sufficient to drive all members of the Nonconformist churches outside of all civil and municipal administration. This was the law briefly stated:—"No person or persons shall be placed, elected, or chosen, in, or to, any of the offices of mayor, alderman, recorder, bailiff, town clerk, common councilman, or other offices of magistracy, or place of trust, or other employment relating to or concerning the government of any city, corporate borough, Cinque Port, or town in England, Wales, and Berwick-upon-Tweed, that shall not have, one year before such election or choice, taken the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England." That was the enactment, so far as their fellow-countrymen were concerned, and it practically drove them outside the pale of civil

and municipal government. The act was repealed in opposition to the strenuous efforts of the Tory members of Parliament. The Test and Corporation Act was won by the persistent efforts of Lord Russell and his colleagues; and of late years the Nonconformists had enjoyed full recognition of their civil and municipal rights. (Applause.) But it was within even a few years that he, as a member of the Town Council, and his friends Mr. Southern, Mr. Temple, Mr. Cook, and Mr. Brown, were compelled to make a most offensive declaration of a very prolonged and objectionable character before they could take their seats. That law was in force till three or four years ago, and it was only on the motion of Mr. Hadfield, the member for Sheffield, with the support of the Liberal party, that it was removed, and the oath which was substituted simplified and adapted to the consciences and wishes of those who had to take it. (Applause.) That was the last ray of Tory hostility to religious equality in regard to the Nonconformist portion of the community. In other respects, they had not been treated with much more consideration than the Catholics. They had fought their battles resolutely, or rather their forefathers had done so. They had won their way to moral and political influence, and they had fought it step by step against all the resistance of their Tory opponents. (Applause.) Then there was the Quaker body, which, though not so numerous, was still an important and influential body. They, too, were subject to pains and penalties even more opprobrious than those inflicted upon ordinary Nonconformists. But by that patient resistance which was the brightest portion of the Quaker character, they steadily and quietly resisted the oppression, and that resistance was successful. (Loud applause.)

THE JEWS.

Their Jewish fellow-countrymen, a weaker section still, had had their oppressive disqualifications removed only very recently, and they were told, when it was proposed to remove them, that the Christian character of the Legislature would be imperilled. (Laughter and applause.) Had that been the case? No! There had been no tendency in that direction since the admission of Jews to Parliament, although now there were five or six Jewish members in the House of Commons. And as he had said a few evenings ago elsewhere, one of the most distinguished members of that body had been raised to a very high position on the judicial bench in this land. He had troubled them with those

somewhat tedious historical facts for the purpose of showing that the statements of his opponent were not borne out by the historical records of this country; and to prove that, so far as the Tories were concerned, they had ever resisted all efforts towards attaining religious freedom. They had in every instance insisted on maintaining the exclusive privilege of one religious denomination; and they said that as soon as those enactments were passed, as soon as those reforms were completed, the doom of our constitution was sealed—(laughter and applause)—and that the sun of England's glory would set in ruin and revolution. (Renewed applause.) But every one of their predictions had been falsified; and, as Lord Macaulay said nearly at the termination of his career, “during the whole of his life he had heard nothing but predictions of ruin and destruction, and he had seen nothing but evidences of progress and prosperity.” The battle that had been won by the Liberals was but one further advance in the way of progress in this country. All the achievements that had been accomplished had been additional posts driven into the foundation, increasing the stability of the Constitution, and contributing to strengthen and improve and extend the influence of the nation. (Applause.) They must remember that, although the Tories now spoke “with bated breath and whispering humbleness” on those questions, the same principles that animated them in keeping all those different religious denominations outside of the pale of the political and municipal life of this country, animated them still. (Hisses and applause.) They could not change the leopard's spots. (Laughter and applause.) They could not change the tiger's stripes—(renewed laughter)—and he repeated that it was not want of will, but want of power, that kept the Tories from enforcing their principles. There was not one of those enactments to which he had referred, outrageous though they were, that had not been maintained to the last moment by their Tory rulers. There was not one of those penalties or disabilities to which he had called attention, which had not been justified by Tory orators and writers. And he maintained, therefore, that in making this general declaration that the Tories were not in favour of religious liberty—(loud applause)—he was simply stating a fact that could be verified by reference to the history of this country—(applause)—and by the experience of all fair and impartial men. The change that had been brought about in this direction in the liberalization of our Constitution in the way he had mentioned had been a source of strength to the institutions of the country, and had developed the power and intellect of the nation.

They might depend upon it, that any country that possessed institutions which cramped the intellect, and which deprived the nation of the full force and mental activity of every citizen of the empire—institutions that had such an influence upon the State, were detrimental to the well-being of humanity. In a settled community such as we now possessed, it was desirable to have the combined efforts of all the citizens. There was no one who could be altogether right. The best of them would make errors in judgment, and there were many of them who saw things from narrow and limited aspects. The best men in the State were liable to this narrow vision; but when they brought the intellect and moral responsibilities of the entire population to the consideration of questions affecting our national welfare, they were much more likely to arrive at rational, settled, and satisfactory conclusions. In putting their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, and also the Nonconformists, the Quakers, and the Jews upon terms of absolute equality before the law, the Liberals had contributed to the stability, freedom, and maintenance of the constitution. (Applause.) They had increased the moral force of Englishmen, and as the future would prove, tended to extend the influence of this nation to the furthest corners of the earth. (Loud applause.) He did not know how their friend Mr. Hamond made it out that the Liberals were the advocates of religious despotism, and that the Tories were the advocates of religious progress. (Laughter.) The facts, he thought, contradicted that theory. He knew that he was referring to the Education Act; but he (Mr. Cowen) had explained on more than one occasion the grotesque and absurd views of that measure which the Tory candidate was endeavouring to impress on the constituency. It was not correct that they meant to infringe any man's liberty. All they had said, and all they now said, and intended to enforce, was that no man, whatever his religious convictions, should be called upon to contribute, either directly or indirectly, to the propagation of a religious faith that he did not believe in. (Applause.) They laid that down as a principle acted on so far as the religious arrangements of the State were concerned, and they wished to apply it to the arrangements of our system of education. And he was satisfied if the people of this country viewed the question of education aright, if they would turn their attention to it altogether irrespective of sects and parties, and if they would make it a national question, in which the interests of the State as a State, and of the

people as a people, were concerned, and not a mere fraction of the country, they would do wisely. They were all interested in the education of the people. There was a very simple but expressive sentiment that "Knowledge is power." It was power to the individual to increase his capacity, to improve his own condition, to improve and strengthen his resources, to add to his intellectual enjoyments, and to increase the nation's means of competing with every other nation of the earth. (Applause.) He thought the action on the part of the Liberal Government with respect to education had been one that was deserving of their warmest approval. (Applause.) The measure to which they had given the force of law might not meet all their requirements, and did not in many of its details meet his approval; but he was disposed with respect to the Education Act, to utilise what they had got, and endeavour patiently and fairly to alter and improve its provisions. While, therefore, he condemned certain clauses of the Education Act, he would have all dispassionate and liberal-minded Englishmen to endeavour to utilise the good clauses and to improve the bad clauses, so that they might make one united effort to educate the people in those principles of Liberal progress and useful knowledge that must add to their power and contribute to the glory of the empire. He had no wish and no disposition to narrow this education question to a mere sectarian issue; and he thought that his opponent on this occasion, in giving such special and emphatic attention to the different clauses of this Act, showed that he was anxious to follow not exactly the same course of procedure. His opponent would wish to excite some needless and necessary prejudices to the action of the Liberals, and to cause them to divert their attention from the main issue by giving attention to mere details. He repeated, then, that so far as the general declaration of Mr. Hamond was concerned, he disposed of it by giving these sound historical facts, and, he thought, fair dispassionate arguments, to show that the accusation that he made against them was not correct, but that, on the other hand, it applied to the party of which that gentleman was the representative. (Cheers.) For his part, he had faith in the good sense and integrity of his fellow-countrymen. It had been one of the most gratifying signs of the times to see the improvement in their material condition, to see that they had better and happier homes, an increased supply of food and better clothing. They had got, too, in conjunction with these, shorter hours of labour; and he felt satisfied the combination of all these, if used wisely, as

they would be, by our fellow-countrymen, would contribute to their own individual and domestic comfort, and would greatly add to the strength and prosperity of our country. (Cheers.) Mr. Cowen, concluded by intimating that he was prepared to answer any question that might be put to him.

The first question was, "Would you allow compensation for vested interests?"

Mr. COWEN said he did not exactly see the full force of the question ; but he would say that, if there was any interest in the country that was recognised by the law, and in which men had invested their capital in compliance with legal enactments, and under these conditions and these protections it was only reasonable that they should have fair compensation. (Hear, hear.) In this country we had never been distinguished for not paying due regard to vested interests. When the West Indian slaveholders had to give up their slaves, we had to pay them a very handsome sum as compensation. He thought that was about the furthest stretch in giving money for compensation that this country could have gone to—paying slaveholders for the interest they were supposed to have in the energy and mental and moral power of human beings who were their equals. (Applause.) For

"Fleecy locks and dark complexion
Cannot forfeit nature's claim ;
Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in white and black the same."

(Cheers.) Therefore, if they had stretched the law of giving compensation so far as to compensate the West Indian slaveholders for the loss of property that, according to all sense of morality or justice, they could not possess, he could not see how they could reasonably refuse compensation for vested interests destroyed by the power of the State. He would speak fairly of all parties, and he did not believe Tories, Whigs, or Liberals, or any section of the community had any disposition to deal unfairly by any sect or party so far as vested interests were concerned. We had disestablished and disendowed the Church in Ireland, and there was not a single clergyman of that establishment but had had his vested interests scrupulously respected. On various occasions we had altered the law so far as our civil and military arrangements were concerned, and every man in those services, if his office was abolished, and if he had got the office with a reasonable expectation that it would last for life, had his interest regarded, and compensation given. Indeed, he did not see as a matter of equity how it could be otherwise. (Hear, hear.) However much he might

object to certain trades, and however much they might wish to remove those trades, certainly he would respect the individual and personal interests of the men that had invested money in them. (Applause.)

The second question was, "Are you in favour of extending the hours of polling?"

Mr. COWEN, in replying, said he certainly and most decidedly was. (Hear, hear.) He thought that the whole law regulating the recording of votes in this country was deserving of considerable amendment; and if the Liberal Government, or certain members of it, had been allowed to have it their own way, they would have had much longer hours for taking the votes of the masses of our population. (Applause.) Mr. Forster, in the passing of the Ballot Act through the House of Commons, was anxious, he believed, to extend the hours considerably. The hours of polling if he mistook not, were from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon, and they were all perfectly well aware that a great mass of this large constituency were at their ordinary avocations during these hours, and the opportunity they had of voting was at the breakfast time and during the dinner hour. (Hear, hear.) Now, the number of workmen who had to vote in that short space of time was so great that the polling booths became crowded probably, and thus many of them were deprived, against their wish, of the opportunity of recording their votes. (A voice: "It will be all right on Wednesday!") The polling booths were often placed in distant parts of the districts, and time was lost in going from one portion of the district to the other; and he thought that they not only ought to have the hours extended, but that they ought to have the number of polling districts increased, and to have every reasonable facility given for the recording of votes. (Applause.) The Ballot was an immense improvement upon the former way of taking votes, but he thought it would never be complete until the hours for polling were extended, and every opportunity was given to the electors to record their votes. They were to mark that he was not merely speaking for this question on the Liberal side; he spoke of it so far as every citizen was concerned; but they all knew that the hours for polling affected to a much larger extent the artizan classes than they did the trading and manufacturing classes. The traders and manufacturers could leave their offices during the day without any serious loss, but the working man could not leave his factory without sacrificing a quarter or half-day. (Hear, hear.) If it should happen that he had to go Parliament, he should strongly

advise that the hours of polling should be increased, and that every facility should be given to every human being in the constituency to vote with comfort to himself, and without any needless sacrifice. (Applause.)



SPEECH XI.

(Town Hall, Saturday, January 31st.)

THE TWO LEADERS BEFORE THE COUNTRY—THE INCOME TAX—THE INDIRECT TAXES—LOCAL TAXATION—EXTENSION OF THE COUNTY FRANCHISE—THE MEASURES OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, we have made a good beginning. The chairman of the Newcastle Liberal Committee, who received as strong censure from our Tory opponents as any one engaged in the late contest, was, I believe, the first member elected to the new Parliament. (Cheers.) Elected, too, in a borough not undistinguished for its attachment to Conservative principles in past years. I trust that this is an augury of the success that will attend the Liberal cause generally in this north-east corner of England. (Applause.) Mr. Smith has been returned for Tynemouth unopposed. I believe Mr. Stevenson has been returned unopposed for South Shields; and if my good friend Mr. Burt is not returned unopposed for Morpeth, his victory there is so assured that we may certainly calculate upon his being a member for that ancient borough. (Cheers.)

THE TWO LEADERS BEFORE THE COUNTRY.

There is now before the country a broad and unmistakeable issue. We have the two leaders of the great political parties on whom the State depends appealing to us for our verdict on the questions they have put before us. We have seen both their programmes. Now, let us reason together upon them. (Laughter and applause.) I have great faith in a dispassionate and impartial statement of facts, and in a fair appeal to reason from those facts. Mr. Disraeli has

issued a manifesto, and if I were called upon to characterize it, in one word I would say it was a negative programme. If I were called upon to pronounce one word in description of Mr. Gladstone's programme I should say it was a positive programme. The only positive point in Mr. Disraeli's address is something that he says about the Straits of Malacca. (Loud laughter.) I know he is dissatisfied with some treaty that he says was made by Mr. Gladstone's Government, but which Mr. Gladstone, I think has pretty conclusively proved was at least proposed in the first instance by the Tories. (Laughter.) He is dissatisfied with that measure; but with the exception of the implied expression of a determination to alter the treaty concerning the Straits of Malacca, I know of no other positive proposition that the Tory leader has submitted to the verdict of the country. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, has put before us a programme that will bear the closest investigation and the strictest scrutiny. There are, I think, three points in his charter—three strong planks in his platform. First, Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with fiscal questions. He proposes to establish greater economy in the management of our national revenue; and greater skill in its collection. In the second place he proposes to deal with large constitutional questions in the way of extending the liberties of the people;—(loud applause)—and in the third place he proposes to deal with certain political and social measures that are forcing themselves for adjustment. Let us look first at the fiscal propositions of Mr. Gladstone; those questions of a financial character I mean. I think we may conveniently divide the propositions again into three heads. Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with the question of direct taxation; also with that of indirect taxation; and thirdly with the question of local taxation.

THE INCOME TAX.

First, with the question of direct taxation! He makes a distinct proposal to entirely abolish the income-tax. (Hear.) Now I speak candidly when I say that I have never been one of those who have condemned that impost with the heartiness that some of our countrymen have done. There are points with respect to the tax which ought to commend it to our approval I think. It is a direct tax, and in so far, I am in its favour, because I approve of all direct taxation. (Applause.) When men have to pay direct national taxes they are much more likely to scrutinize the manner in which those taxes are expended than when levied insidiously

in an indirect manner. In so far, then, as the income tax is a direct tax, I believe Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party generally commend it, but it has about it certain conditions that make it exceedingly objectionable and irritating to the commercial classes of this country. There are some people who talk of the income-tax as if it was a new tax. That is an error. It is one of the oldest taxes that we know of in this country. Upwards of 350 years ago a Tudor monarch laid a tax on the incomes of the people of the day, to the amount of one-tenth on the income of every trader and one-twentieth on the income of every clergyman. He expected out of the proceeds of the tax to commence a war with France, but the people refused the tax and the war did not take place. (Laughter and applause.) No further attempt was made to impose an income-tax until the war with France in 1793 and 1794. Then the income-tax was imposed for a short period, but it was objected to and repealed a year or two afterwards. But, in 1803 the income-tax was imposed by the Tory Government of the day, and lasted for thirteen years. It was first levied at 1s. in the pound, and afterwards it was raised to 2s. in the pound; the reason for the tax being levied simply being to carry on a warfare against the liberties of the French nation. At the termination of that war in 1815, the income-tax was abolished, and was heard of no more until 1842. I call your attention, however, to this remarkable and rather interesting fact, that while the income-tax levied in 1807 at 1s. in the pound only produced a little over four millions in the shape of revenue, a tax of 3d. in the pound at the present day produces upwards of seven millions; or, in other words, one-fourth of the tax now produces nearly double the amount of revenue it did half a century ago—a wonderful proof of the improvement of the commercial position and material prosperity of the country. (Applause.) In 1842 the income-tax was re-imposed by Sir Robert Peel, and I think, with all its drawbacks, we are entitled to speak of the impost at that time with respect. For this reason: During the war almost everything that a man could eat or drink or use was taxed more or less. The tariff of this country extended to some thousand different articles, and it very often happened that the cost of collecting those taxes was four or five times as great as the tax itself amounted to. Sir Robert Peel saw that the trade of the country was being fettered, and that the commercial prosperity of the nation was being gagged by a complete net-work of taxation, and he made this proposition—that the trading classes of the country should submit to the im-

position of an income tax of £2 18s. 4d. per cent., and in consideration of that impost, he would relieve the indirect taxation to the extent of twelve millions. (Applause.) He did so, and the income-tax that was imposed in 1842 produced something like five millions of pounds, the indirect taxation removed having been twelve millions. (Applause.) Sir Robert Peel was not in any sense a democratic statesman. He was specially cautious and timid in all constitutional measures, but he was, without question, a great master of finance; and the result of his operations in the way he had just indicated so astonished him that he determined he would persevere in the same direction. The tax had been imposed for three years—from 1842 to 1845—and it proved so successful, and such a rebound had come to our commerce in consequence of it, that at the end of the period of three years it was re-imposed from 1845 to 1848, and again to 1851, and each time it was levied a larger measure of indirect taxation was taken off the backs of the people and the commerce of the country. (Loud applause.) In 1851, the tax was extended for seven years, and shortly after that took place the Crimean War. It had been understood that at the end of the seven years the tax should be abolished, but the war broke out, and the effects it had on the finances of the country rendered additional taxation necessary, and made it impossible to abolish the income tax, which has been continued up to the present time. Mr. Gladstone has declared on more than one occasion that it would be the greatest pleasure of his life, inasmuch as he contributed to impose the income tax, if he could have the satisfaction of removing it—(applause)—and now, by the wise economy of the Liberal Government, he is going to be in a position to do it. (Cheers.) The tax which was imposed in 1842 is to be abolished in 1874. (Loud cheers.) Now, I say I wish to speak with a certain amount of respect with regard to an old friend, and in parting with the income-tax it would be well for us to recollect that through the imposition of that tax we have, to a large measure, participated in the boundless advantages of unfettered commerce. But there are certain regulations about the income-tax that make it specially objectionable. Indeed, I think it is one of the greatest proofs of the intelligence of the people that they have submitted without murmur to its imposition. The French people refused to have an income-tax. Powerful though M. Thiers was in the Assembly a few months ago, he feared to impose an income-tax on the people. It had been proposed to levy an income-tax in Germany, and also

in Spain, but there was no statesman bold enough to levy it. They had one in America, and there it was a war tax. They had a very good plan in dealing with the tax in that country—they published the income-tax returns, and every man's income appeared in the newspapers—(laughter)—a very good thing for the newspaper proprietors—(great laughter)—and not a bad one for the nation ; because there are some people who are weak and extremely anxious to appear in the estimation of their neighbours as being richer than they really are, and the financial Minister of the United States says that the revenue of the Republic has been increased some millions solely by the gratification of this vanity of the commercial classes. (Laughter and applause.) Our English mode of dealing with the tax has been somewhat different. We have not published the returns in the newspapers, and the result has been that while conscientious men, truth-loving men, have paid honestly on their incomes, unscrupulous men have reaped a large measure of advantage by returning incomes below what they really were. This description of tax, therefore, has had a demoralising effect on the commercial classes of the country. I have spoken of its advantages, and I also think there are great disadvantages attending its imposition. First, it is, I think, unjust in its application. I hold that it is unfair to tax a man with a fluctuating income in the same way as a man with a certain income. A man engaged in business may one year make large profits, while the next he sustains a loss ; and that man, afraid probably to submit the exact condition of his trading transactions to the world, is often mulcted in a greater sum than he fairly and reasonably ought to pay. In that sense, therefore, the income-tax is unjust. And further, I think it is inquisitorial, because a trader is called upon to go and submit his books often to a man engaged in the same business ; and so, with the view to concealment, he often submits to an imposition that he ought not to be justly called upon to bear. Further still, there is a class in the community that it presses exceedingly hard upon, and that is the men in receipt of comparatively small incomes, such as clerks and others. In this country within the last two or three years we have had great commercial prosperity. The manufacturing and mining interests were never in a more favourable state. The working classes have had shorter hours and increased remuneration, but men with fixed incomes have been called upon to pay enhanced prices for the commodities which they require to purchase, such as food, clothing, house rent, and coals, and yet their incomes

have not increased in proportion. Upon these classes, clerks and others, the income-tax presses with special severity. I do not think that class in Newcastle is particularly favourable to Liberal views. (Laughter.) Many of them voted for the Tory candidate last election, and probably a number will do the same this time; but I wish to say that if they are under the impression that they will receive any large measure of redress from Tory statesmen or Tory financiers they are mistaken. (Laughter and applause.) I repeat, however, that so far as that class is concerned the removal of the income-tax will be a welcome and substantial relief. Mr. Gladstone proposes to abolish the income-tax entirely, and by that means he removes from the shoulders of the commercial classes upwards of seven millions of direct taxation.

THE INDIRECT TAXES.

The next point in his programme is the dealing with the indirect taxes. These are paid chiefly by the industrial orders, while the income-tax, which is a direct tax, falls mainly upon the trading classes. Now the indirect taxes that Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with are, I believe, the taxes on sugar, tea and coffee. (Applause.) There is no disposition, I believe, on the part of the Government to alter the duties upon wines or spirits, ales, or tobacco, (Applause.) They are—I dare not say necessities of life, for my friend, the Mayor of Gateshead, would reprove me if I spoke any such social heresy—(loud laughter)—but I will say, whether necessities of life or not, there are a large number of people who voluntarily abstain from them. But tea, sugar, and coffee are absolutely, as society now exists, necessities of our daily life, and so Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with them in the same emphatic and, if I may use the term, the same radical manner in which he proposes to deal with the income-tax. (Applause.) He will remove them entirely. He may not be able to accomplish all this at once but I believe Mr. Gladstone himself and his Government as a body are committed to the establishment of what Mr. Bright has described so very correctly as a free breakfast table. I think that the removal of those indirect taxes will have as beneficial an influence on the trade of the nation as the establishment of railways or the abolition of the Corn Laws. (Applause.) By removing the taxes on the three commodities that I have spoken of, the Custom Houses will practically be abolished, and the machinery through which indirect taxes will be collected will be the Excise. By that means alone, the nation will save a large amount in the mere cost of collection.

If this country can be made an open port ; if custom houses can be abolished, I believe it would be found that such an impulse would be given to our commerce as has not been witnessed in this generation. (Applause.) Our great Prime Minister, therefore, deals fairly with both classes in the state. He deals with trading classes generally, by removing upwards of seven millions of taxes in the shape of the income-tax, and he deals with the industrial classes by removing upwards of seven millions from the indirect taxes. (Applause.)

LOCAL TAXATION.

The third species of taxation that he proposes to deal with is local taxation—the “incidents of local taxation”—(great laughter)—as my distinguished opponent put it. And I believe there is not in any department of the country a greater state of confusion than in our local government. It is absolute chaos ; chaos amongst the authorities who levy the taxes ; chaos among the parties who collect the taxes ; chaos in the departments in which they are imposed, and the area over which they are collected. (Loud laughter.) I am interested in a piece of property that is situated in three townships—(laughter)—in two parishes—(more laughter)—in two local board districts, and one ecclesiastical district ; in two Burial Boards—(loud laughter)—in two counties, and in one country. (Renewed laughter.) Every one of those organisations calls upon the parties interested in this property to pay some description of tax, and I defy even any lawyer to discover the gross amount of imposts upon that unfortunate property. (Loud laughter.) It is a perfect Eastern puzzle, and it is simply an illustration of various other pieces of property throughout the country. There is no system on which our local taxation is founded. The fact is that our present system did as Topsy in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” did—it grew. (Laughter.) There is a certain method in respect to imperial taxation, and certain broad general principles laid down for its management and collection ; but in local taxation no such principle is to be found. Whenever a public want has been discovered a board has been established, or some sort of organisation has been formed, to tax the people, in order to supply that want. The consequence is that it is impossible for any man to thoroughly comprehend this curious net-work of taxation, or the authorities that deal with our local matters. Now Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with the question in as thorough and complete a manner as he deals with the other two branches of fiscal subjects. Mr. Goschen, as the representative of the Government, three years ago

sketched out a bold but able and most statesmanlike plan for dealing with that question, and I believe the present Government is pledged—at all events Mr. Gladstone is pledged—to that plan. The affairs of counties at the present time are managed by the magistrates—a most self-important body—(laughter)—self-elected and irresponsible. They have the control of the finances of counties, they are absolute masters in that department of the State, and veritable Jacks in office they are. (Laughter and cheers.) What Mr. Goschen proposed on behalf of the Government you will see is not a very revolutionary project notwithstanding the attacks of the Tory squires. They have showered much abuse upon it, and the Tory reaction they talk of has been to some extent the consequence of Mr. Goschen's proposal, which struck at the root of that which had been the mainstay of the Tories in this country. Of all the divisions of the State into parishes, townships, and board districts, townships probably are the most ancient. The country was first marked out into townships in the time of Alfred the Great. Townships have chiefly reference to Poor-laws and other similar matters, but the parishes are of a more ecclesiastical character, and are probably the better known. What the Government proposes is to retain the parishes intact and make them the basis of their organisation. The proposition is that the ratepayers in every parish shall meet once a year and appoint a person as mayor or parochial chief, just as the burgesses in town do now; that these parish mayors shall have charge of the financial arrangements of the parish; and that the poor-law authorities, the highway authorities, the burial board authorities, or whatever other authorities exist shall be asked to send to this parochial chief elected by the ratepayers a statement of the money they require for their next year's expenditure. The parochial officer having received a statement, from all the different authorities in the parish, of the money required for their respective purposes, will put it upon the rate-paper and specify what it is for—so much for the highway, so much for the local board, so much for the burial board, and otherwise—and will assess the ratepayers accordingly. Under this plan when a man is called upon to pay a tax he will know how the money will be applied. (Cheers.) Is that not a fair and intelligible mode of conducting the business? At the present time there are upwards of 12,000 people engaged in collecting the parochial taxes of the country—a perfect army of officials! By simplifying the mode of collection in the manner I have described it is calculated that some hundreds of thousands of

pounds, I believe almost millions, will be saved to the nation. (Cheers.) These parochial officers elected by the ratepayers along with others will be appointed in every county, and there will also be in every county a Board composed equally of landlords and occupiers. The magistrates are supposed to represent the land-owners, because no man can be a magistrate in a county without he has freehold property which yields him £100 a year. The magistrates then, will be called upon to appoint a given number, and the ratepayers an equal number, and the Board so constituted will be supreme in the management of county affairs. They will act through the county mayors, and by direct action of the magistrates. I submit that that is an intelligible, reasonable, and practical way of treating the question. (Cheers.) I know it is not favourably received by the Tory party, and is not likely to be so, because it will considerably diminish their prestige and importance. But it will do infinitely more! It will add to the power of the ratepayers, and will give them control over the funds they have to contribute. We have no distinct proposal from the Government as to how they will deal with the actual amount raised for local purposes, and the amount that will be imposed upon the Imperial Exchequer, but I may say this, that the local taxation of this country has more than doubled within the last thirty years, and that the amount of money contributed for local purposes in England and Wales is upwards of £30,000,000 per annum, and in Ireland and Scotland £8,000,000. In round numbers, therefore, upwards of £38,000,000 per annum is contributed for local purposes in Great Britain and Ireland. That is a large question for any Government to deal with, and it is the third branch of the commercial and financial questions which Mr. Gladstone proposes to grapple with in the next parliament. (Cheers.) He proposes to deal with it in a way that will give increased power to the ratepayers without, I think, doing injustice to the land-owners. We have not any proposal before us as to the local taxes he will throw upon the Imperial Exchequer, but I do believe that when the question comes to be quietly sifted in Parliament, as it no doubt will be, it will be found that the land of this country does not contribute its fair quota to local expenditure. The land of this country was valued in the reign of William and Mary nearly 200 years ago, and a tax was imposed of 4s. in the pound upon that valuation made at the date named. I am satisfied that when the question is investigated it will be found that the land does not bear its fair proportion of taxation, while

the town population bears an undue proportion. (Cheers.) The taxation of the town population has increased within the last seven years more than 15 per cent., whereas the taxation levied upon land and its accessories has only increased 2 per cent. I believe, therefore, that you will find that this question will receive at the hands of Mr. Gladstone's Government the same masterly and statesmanlike treatment that all financial questions have received at Mr. Gladstone's hands during the last twenty-five years. (Cheers.) Our opponents, the Tories, attempt to make merry with or to treat lightly this question of economy and taxation. They are disposed to pass it by as a matter of comparative indifference. Gentlemen, the Tories have never been good financiers. They ridicule Mr. Gladstone in his dealing with the surplus, and seem to think that no credit is due to the Liberal Government for getting it. A Tory Government, during the last twenty years, has never had a surplus to deal with. During the last ten years there has been a surplus revenue in this country of upwards of £26,000,000. For two years there has been a deficiency of upwards of £5,000,000, and I think it is somewhat remarkable that the surplus during the eight years has always been when the Liberals were in power, and the deficiency when the Tories were in power. (Cheers.) These figures may be in one sense dry, but they are eloquent testimony to the commercial capacity of the Liberal Government, and to the commercial incapacity of the Tories. (Cheers.) That is the first plank of Mr. Gladstone's programme—the commercial or financial reform proposed. It is upon that that he mainly bases his appeal to the people for support. It is impossible to suppose that Mr. Gladstone can remit £14,000,000 of taxation all at once without some re-adjustment and possible imposition of other taxes. It is possible we may be called upon to pay in another way certain taxes which we have not in the past been called upon to contribute to the State, but I believe Mr. Gladstone mainly looks to recoup himself for the loss he will sustain in removing these taxes to increased economy in the management of all the departments of the State. (Cheers.) A penny saved is a penny gained, and I have the greatest regard for any who labour to that end. Mr. Lowe, condemned though he has been, is deserving I think of greater recognition for his services in attempting to save the funds of the people than he has yet received. I believe you will find, when Mr. Gladstone comes to deal with these questions, that the main grounds on which he expects to remove this large mass of taxation is by increased economy in the different branches of the State.

EXTENSION OF THE COUNTY FRANCHISE.

Now, the second point of the programme is that of extending the liberties of the people. Mr. Gladstone says he will give the same franchise to people in the counties as is possessed by people in the boroughs. Argument on that question is unnecessary. It must be patent to every fair-dealing, upright man that it is an outrage upon justice that the people living on one side of an imaginary line should have a certain political power, and that those living on the other side should be deprived of it. But, just though that demand is, our Tory opponents intend to resist it. Mr. Disraeli, however, does not base his resistance to it on its intrinsic merits. He does not say that he will oppose the extension of household franchise to counties because the present state of things is unjust. He says, as an answer to the demand, that the distinction has always been customary, and this country, he says, is governed more by custom than by law. I have an idea that law makes the custom. (Hear, hear.) It is curious, but if you examine the question you will find that many of our customs, and those the most deeply-rooted in the national mind and habit, have sprung from the laws. (Hear, hear.). But let that pass. Mr. Disraeli, I say, states that the custom of this country has been to have a difference between the franchise in towns and the franchise in boroughs. It is a pity Mr. Disraeli has not a better memory. That is not the doctrine he always preached. I have no wish to be hard on the distinguished leader of her Majesty's Opposition. He has played many parts in his time. He has boxed the political compass. His first appearance in public was as a full-fledged Radical on the hustings at Maidstone, under the support and patronage of the late Mr. Joseph Hume; and I have a distinct recollection of reading a very clever and amusing poem of his called the "Revolutionary Epick," in which he propounded doctrines infinitely more Communistic than ever were propounded by the individual addressing you. (Laughter and cheers.) I remember one expression that he made use of, and that was that his "*forte* was revolution!" Well, Mr. Disraeli has changed, and I have no wish to deal hardly with him in consequence of his change. I do not think that he has changed for the better; but, still, notwithstanding his right about change so far as his general political action is concerned, I think that on this question of the county franchise his change is even more marked. I have here a copy of "Hansard's Debates," containing a considerable number of Mr. Disraeli's orations; and these printed speeches are some-

times difficult to get over. I have no wish to trouble this large audience; it would be out of place, and I am sure it would be tedious to read to you any lengthened extracts, but there are two or three sentences which I should just like you to listen to as illustrating the point I wish to be at. Our charge against Mr. Disraeli is this. He says that he will not consent or does not approve of lowering the county franchise, because there always was, and always ought to be, a difference between the franchise in boroughs and in counties. Now, about eight or nine years ago Mr. Disraeli's Government proposed a measure of Parliamentary Reform of a very limited character. At that time the borough franchise was £10. No man was allowed to vote in Newcastle and other boroughs unless he occupied a house the rental of which was £10; and no man was allowed to vote as an occupier in a county unless he held property, farm, house, or otherwise—that yielded £50 per annum. Mr. Disraeli, in answer to the demands of the people of Newcastle, Birmingham, and elsewhere, for a measure of reform, made the very mild proposition, that instead of conceding what we were asking for, the county franchise of £50 occupation should be reduced to the level of the town franchise of £10 occupation. These are his words:—

“Where, then, when we are considering the condition of the constituency of the country; when we are endeavouring to reconstruct it on a broad basis, which will admit within its pale all those who are trustworthy—shall we look for means by which we may terminate these heart-burnings, and restore the constituencies of England to what I will venture to call their natural elements? Her Majesty's Government have given to this subject the most anxious consideration. I may say, that if labour, if thought, could assist us to arrive at a proper solution, neither labour nor thought has been spared. Is there any principle on which we can restore the county constituency to its natural state, and bring about that general and constant sympathy between the two portions of the constituent body which ought to exist? Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that some such solution does exist. We think there is a principle, the justness of which will be at once acknowledged, the logical consequences of which will be at once remedial, and, if applied with due discretion, will effect all those objects which we anxiously desire with respect to the county constituency. We find that principle in recognizing the identity of suffrage between county and town. I will proceed to show the

House what, in our opinion, would be the practical consequences of recognizing that identity."

That is Mr. Disraeli's own speech, and in another volume of "Hansard" may be found a speech of the present Lord Derby, who was then Lord Stanley, in which he made the statement that it was impossible to permanently maintain the difference between the town and county populations; and the only way to give satisfaction to both was to level the franchise. Now, what I say, Mr. Chairman, is this—that, what was good in 1859 is good in 1874. If it was desirable, as Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby admitted then, to exqualize the franchise between towns and counties, it is equally desirable now. We have got the household franchise in our boroughs; we have got that in a measure from Mr. Disraeli, though not with any hearty consent. It did not come by any free-will. We got it because he could not help it. The Tories were in office, and they wanted the sweets and patronage of office and the prestige of place. They knew that a Reform Bill was inevitable, and, with a view of manipulating the force of that reform measure to Tory purposes, they conceded the demands of the people. Now, having granted that demand to boroughs, I think, with fair consistency, in view of Mr. Disraeli's and Lord Derby's declarations on this subject, we may fairly ask them to extend the borough franchise to the county. But whether Mr. Disraeli wishes to have the change, or whether he would not, I am satisfied of this, that if we give Mr. Gladstone a strong, hearty, and enthusiastic majority in the House of Commons, we shall not be many months before we see it achieved. You know, gentlemen, what will be the consequences of the extension of the franchise. The admission of every householder to the suffrage in our boroughs gave great impetus to political life, and, I trust, caused great advance in the social improvement of the people; and I believe that the enfranchisement of our fellow subjects in the counties will lend even a greater impulse to the national vigour of our country. There is no section of our fellow countrymen that have been treated more hardly, there is none deserving of more consideration than our agricultural labourers. These men have had within these last few years a new gospel preached to them. The poor fellows that have been living, or rather existing, upon a few shillings a week have now got some faint glimmering of their position as men and as citizens of a great empire, I trust, therefore, that this measure of Mr. Gladstone's, which will be equally as acceptable to the Northern miners and Northern agriculturists as it is to

those in the Southern portion of the country, will lend new life and animation to those classes, and give greater strength to our Imperial institutions. (Cheers.) The household franchise in boroughs added something like 800,000 voters to the register. I believe that the enfranchisement of the householders in counties will add an equal number, and with that, greater strength to our constitution. I am satisfied that the laws of this land will be more revered, and that the stability of our Government will be consolidated. (Cheers.) That is the second point in Mr. Gladstone's programme—the constitutional point. The third one is to deal with those great social questions that have been coming up within the last few years, and forcing their way into consideration. Mr. Gladstone proposes to deal with the question of land, the mode of transfer and the mode of occupation; to give to England, Scotland, and Wales a land measure equal to, if not better than that he gave to Ireland. He proposes to deal with the question of the Game Laws, which have been forcing themselves for consideration upon all careful judges, or earnest students of our social life. He proposes to deal with those great questions affecting directly our working classes, among them the Criminal Law Amendment Act. (Cheers.) He proposes to deal with that almost interminable question, the liquor traffic—(hear, hear, and applause)—and to consider the social condition of this country, with a view to its improvement. It is not necessary to specify all these questions or to enter into detail concerning them; I merely mention them as the great collateral issues that are at stake in this contest. This is the last plank of Mr. Gladstone's platform; and, though it is last, it is not the least important, and it is one for the consideration of which he will receive a large measure of additional support from the people.

THE MEASURES OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT.

Now, some of our friends are disposed to think that on a few points Mr. Gladstone's manifesto has been halting. I know our Nonconformist friends are scarcely satisfied. I admit that on that question Mr. Gladstone is scarcely orthodox. If he has any weakness at all it is a tenderness for the "Mother Church." We cannot expect any man to be perfect, and Mr. Gladstone has strong claims to our confidence and regard, and we must tolerate what we think weakness on that point. The Church question has not come forward with sufficient power and volume as a practical question of legislation, and I think that in dealing with these financial subjects, with these constitutional measures, and with these social

measures there is work enough for the next five or six years. When Mr. Gladstone's Government got into power in 1868, he proposed to disestablish and disendow the Irish Church, to grant a land measure to Ireland, and to deal with the question of education ; and if you look back to the last five years of the last Parliament, you will see that in every year some great measure of national utility has been enacted by his exertions. At one time the Irish Church, next the Irish land measure, next the question of the reduction of the army or the abolition of purchase, afterwards the question of judicature—the arrangements of our courts of law—and last, though not least, the question of the ballot. (Applause.) Those during the last five years. In all those measures which will receive attention during the next five years, and which I have sketched briefly and hurriedly from Mr. Gladstone's manifesto, I think there is work, and substantial work, yet to come, and during that time our good friends the Nonconformists must be busy sowing their seed and educating the people. Depend upon it, gentlemen, that the mode of procedure in this country, although somewhat slow, is substantially safe in matters of legislation. Our Government does not lead as the French Government does. They have a Government in France that is a "Government of Combat," as they call it—a fighting one. There they have a Government which thinks that the people ought to be converted to Tory notions, and they use a large and powerful machinery for the purpose of converting the people to those opinions. That is the Tory mode of procedure in France, but I am bound in justice to say that the Republican mode is very little better. It was generally thought in France and other nations that the Government ought to lead the people. We, the people in this country, think that the Government ought simply to obey the people ; that *we* should indicate the course that *they* should pursue. The Tories want to go backwards and keep the people from advancing. Our moderate Whigs of the Lord Palmerston school are always lagging behind like brakes upon the wheel of progress. Mr. Gladstone's Government has usually been abreast of public opinion. He has been generally nearly equal to the general public opinion. I would have our Nonconformist friends recollect that fact, and so do the work that is before them. There are two classes of men in this country. There is the statesman and the politician, or, if I might better describe him, the teacher. The politician is the man who goes into the political forest, knocks down the trees, grubs up the under brushwood, clears away the obstructions, and prepares the land ; and the statesman comes after him and scatters

the seed. The masses of his fellow countrymen follow and garner the harvest and enjoy the fruits. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Gentlemen, I and my friends around me are the politicians, the teachers on these questions. We are engaged in this good work of propagandism, preparing the ground for the distinguished leaders that are in Parliament—to cultivate, and fructify, and to scatter the seed. (Applause.) We believe that our work, although more humble and less pretentious, is none the less useful. It may not be surrounded by so much *eclat*, but it is equally dignified. I believe the teacher of political truths, the teacher of great social truths in this country, is engaged in a noble occupation. When the astronomer in his obscure study demonstrates the existence of a planet hitherto unsuspected by astronomy or unknown to the telescope, when the author from his dim garret sends forth his book that will constrain hundreds of his fellow countrymen to weep or to laugh at his will, who topples down a venerable fraud by an allegory, and crushes a dynasty with an epigram, that man will live and reign over a far and extending dominion, when mere pretentious rulers are long since buried and forgotten. (Loud cheers.) To build out of chaos and to deck vacuity, to render some corner of primeval darkness radiant with light, to supplant ignorance by knowledge, and sin by virtue, such is the mission of our world, such is the work that ought to excite the ambition of the lowliest, and demands the support and help of the highest and the most gifted. The time is at hand when all the tottering monuments of ignorance, credulity, and superstition, no longer protected by the foolish awe they formerly inspired, shall strew the earth with their wreck and ruin. Everywhere the young shoots of liberty and progress are springing up between the crevices and corners of the worn-out fabrics of feudalism and Toryism, and are becoming too strong any longer to be checked. They will soon burst asunder the edifices of self-interest which have so long impeded their growth. Total annihilation awaits the whole code of exclusive rights and class distinctions. Whatever has appeared great only through the mist of error or the medium of prejudice shall have light shown upon it, and man shall stand erect in all the moral dignity of his nature, untrammelled by unworthy barriers and unjust social exclusions. For

There is a voice within me, guest angel of my heart ;
 That does with sweetness win me, till tears will often start.
 Up ever more it springeth, like hidden melody ;
 And ever more it singeth, this song of songs to me :
 " This world is full of beauty, as other worlds above ;
 And if men did their duty, it might be full of love."

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